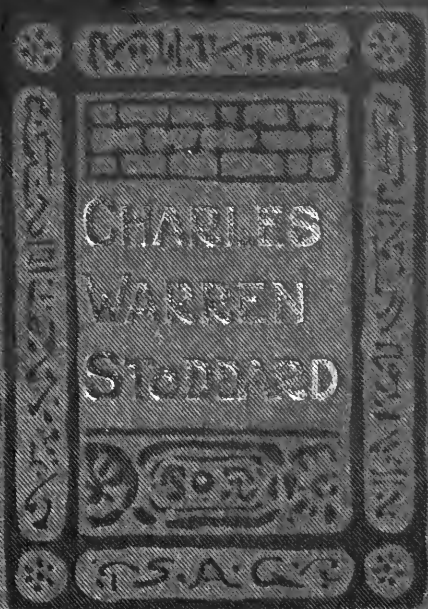


# A CRUISE UNDER THE CRESCENT





FROM THE Turkish Library



RHODES - SOLIMAN'S MOSQUE

OF E. L. Touriel, M. D.

A CRUISE UNDER THE CRESCENT.

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation



# A CRUISE UNDER THE CRESCENT

*FROM SUEZ TO SAN MARCO*

BY  
CHARLES WARREN STODDARD,  
AUTHOR OF "SOUTH SEA IDYLS," ETC.



CHICAGO AND NEW YORK:  
RAND, McNALLY & COMPANY,  
PUBLISHERS.

Copyright, 1898, by Charles Warren Stoddard.

S  
U  
51373

TO MY BELOVED SISTER.



## A CRUISE UNDER THE CRESCENT.

---

CHAPTER.	PAGE.
I—From Suez to San Marco, . . . . .	5
II—At the Gateway of the East, . . . . .	13
III—Going up to Jerusalem, . . . . .	30
IV—Impressions of Jerusalem, . . . . .	54
V—In the Footsteps of our Lord, . . . . .	80
VI—Damascus, "Pearl of the East," . . . . .	189
VII—From Baalbek to Beirut, . . . . .	226
VIII—Glimpses of Asia Minor, . . . . .	239
IX—Athens, . . . . .	250
X—A Cruise in the Homeric Sea, . . . . .	259
XI—Stamboul, . . . . .	279
XII—St. Sophia, . . . . .	306
XIII—On the Bosphorus, . . . . .	317
XIV—Prinkipo, . . . . .	327
XV—The Sultan goes to Mosque, . . . . .	341
XVI—Out of the East, . . . . .	351



# A Cruise Under the Crescent

## I

FROM SUEZ TO SAN MARCO



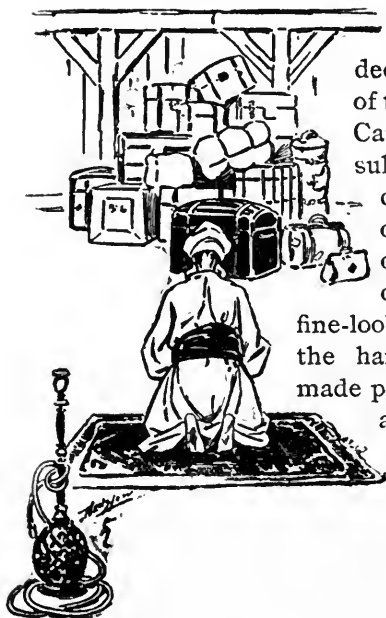
HE "flight into Egypt" having come to an end, we folded our wings for a few days only, and then spread them again, with our faces turned due north.

Thank heaven, there were other worlds to conquer; there always are; this is what makes life worth living.

We booked for Ismailia via Zagazig, leaving Cairo by the morning express in a high wind that was cool and refreshing. All the journey was a kind of rapid review of the Egyptian experiences. Every palm and mimosa, every Arab

village, every Sheik's tomb, with its low white dome, and the strips of water where the *sakias* were slowly turning, and the *shadoofs* were swinging up and down, brought to mind reminiscences of the last four months. It was delightful, in the same way that the remembrance of something great and good accomplished is a delight. Even the two hours' wait at the hot and dusty station of Zagazig, where we saw the train come in from Alexandria and set out for Suez, was less of a trial than it might have been had I not ever in my mind the thought that in a few hours more I should see my last of this glorious land of romantic and eventful history. We all refreshed ourselves

at Zagazig, drawing our feet up under us on the deep divans, and partaking of the luncheon brought from Cairo. Three venerable Mus-sulmans were seated on the divan opposite. A retinue of servants stood by and obeyed the slightest signal of their masters. Many fine-looking men arrived, kissed the hands of these gentlemen, made profound salams, and with a very few words withdrew, backing out of the room.





After a time, one of the distinguished travelers sent a servant into the sun to find the way to Mecca, and, upon his return, a carpet was spread upon the floor, and the pompous old gentleman began his noon-day prayer in front of a heap of luggage that happened to be piled against the wall on the Mecca side of the apartment. Young Arabs sold matches on the platform of the station, wanted to "black your boots" in tolerable English, offered bread, fruit and soda-water for sale, and sought to make themselves useful by seizing upon every valise and carpet-sack within reach. Again we entered the train, and set out for Ismailia. We were very soon in the desert, the desert that at first was dotted with oases and then grew bare and yellow, rolling its long billows of sand to the horizon on every side. The heat was intense; the glare of the sun intolerable. We all grew drowsy, and dropped off to sleep one



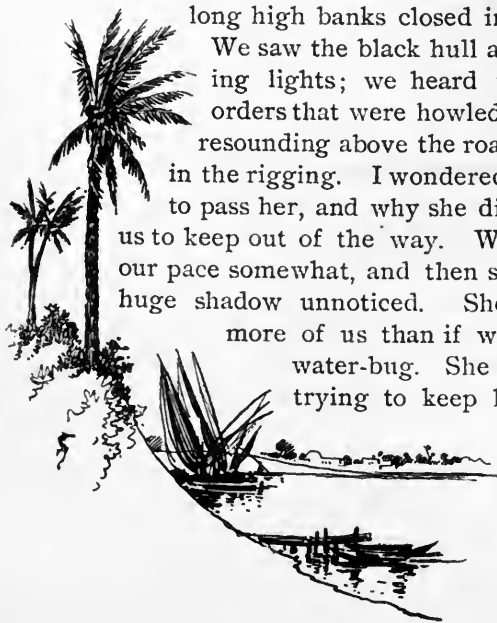
after another.  
Once we stopped at  
a station, a single  
house in the solitude

of sand, where some few officers from the barracks over the ridge, mounted on splendid horses, stood by to watch our arrival and departure. There was a wine-room at this station, filled with curios such as publicans and sinners delight to gather—a motley collection, as interesting as it was unique. Through a door in the rear there was a garden walled in with a fence as high as the house. It was a surprising contrast to the desolation that lay all about us, even to the high sand-drifts blown up against the fence. But you have only to water this desert and it blossoms like the rose. We reached Ismailia before sunset; a thriving town on Lake Timsah, about half-way between Suez and Port Said. It is a garden that may yet become famous as the perennial paradise of Egypt. Its climate is much better than that of Cairo. The lake through which the canal flows affords more agreeable salt-water baths than can be found anywhere else on the coast. It is bountifully supplied with fresh water by the “sweet water canal,” and the roofs of the cottages that rise above the dense and delicious foliage, the broad avenues, the baths, the blue lake and the desert hills, with their marvelous tints of gold and gray, make it a delight to the eye. It has already attracted a goodly number of health-seekers, and there is no reason why it should not ultimately become a fashionable

resort for those who would escape the bitter winters, and at the same time find diversion in the novelty of Oriental life. A long wharf juts into Lake Timsah at Ismailia. After waiting on the pleasure of a ticket-agent for more than an hour he leisurely arrived on a donkey and received us with the calm resignation peculiar to the Moslem. We boarded a steam launch, by no means large enough to accommodate us, and then, packed in a close, stuffy cabin, or sitting together on the windy deck, we rushed through the canal at a headlong pace from sunset till one o'clock in the morning, the most miserable community imaginable. The lake, through which we entered the canal, was soon crossed, and when we found ourselves skimming over the deep blue waters, with high sand banks on each side of us, we all looked about us with intense curiosity, for it was our first sight of one of the wonders of the modern world. As far as we could see, the canal was as straight as an arrow. The high banks, sloping to the water, along the edge of which grow a few hardy shrubs, seemed to draw together at the further end. The width at the water-line in the deep cuts is 190 feet, the depth 26 feet; the total length 100 miles. It grew monotonous in the course of half an hour—the interminable banks like gray walls away above our heads. There was nothing to eat

or drink, save what chanced to be remaining in our hampers. The cabin was too small to smoke in; the wind on deck was whistling like a hurricane, and, therefore, we all subsided into a state of abject misery. At that moment, the important facts concerning the construction of the canal — facts which I will not recall to your memory at this late day, were not of slight interest to us. The moon rose over the top of the embankment, and amused us for a little time with a new effect. But the canal is horribly gloomy at night. It is like sailing through a gap between the two hemispheres. By and by we raised a ship, a monster, that towered above our toy steamer and seemed to touch the stars with its tapering masts. That ship appeared to fill the canal, for the long high banks closed in beyond her.

We saw the black hull and the gleaming lights; we heard the blustering orders that were howled out on board, resounding above the roar of the wind in the rigging. I wondered how we were to pass her, and why she did not caution us to keep out of the way. We did slacken our pace somewhat, and then stole under her huge shadow unnoticed. She thought no more of us than if we had been a water-bug. She was very busy trying to keep herself in the

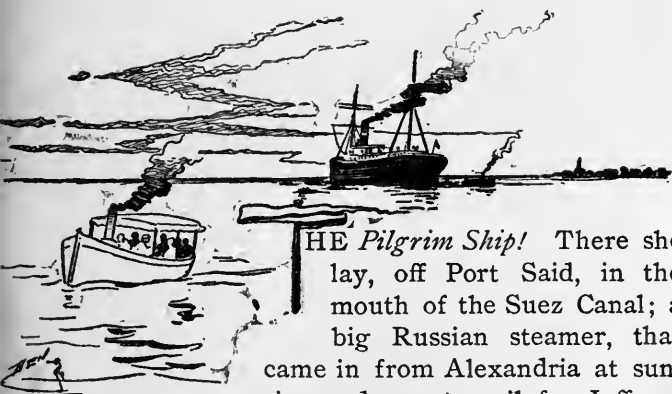


middle of the canal as she slowly drifted toward Suez. Seven ships lay in our track that night — one of these a ship of the line—and all seven of them utterly ignored us, though we were the regular express boat from Ismailia to Port Said. We came to a house presently, a long, low, wooden house, painted white; about half-way up the bank; wooden steps led up the slope to the veranda. There were vines creeping over the roof, and flowers growing in the garden and perfuming the night; but beyond it and above it rose the everlasting bank, and we could see nothing to the right or the left but the dark, narrow, straight gap, with its deep waters ebbing noiselessly from sea to sea. Coffee awaited us at this station—coffee that tasted like lukewarm date-water, and for this we paid dearly. And here we learned that the Khedive had depreciated the currency of the country at the rate of two piastres (five cents) to every four franc piece; other coins retain their customary value until the Khedive has need of further money, when he will probably levy a new tax, after his own fashion. At midnight, we entered the harbor of Port Said. The moon was brilliant, and the white sandy streets of the little city looked as if they were covered with a light fall of snow. Fortunately, there were beds to be had at the Hotel de France, though the town was flooded with

pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem, who had congregated here to take the steamers that touch at this port two or three times a week.

## II.

### AT THE GATEWAY OF THE EAST.



THE *Pilgrim Ship*! There she lay, off Port Said, in the mouth of the Suez Canal; a big Russian steamer, that came in from Alexandria at sunrise, and was to sail for Jaffa at sunset, taking a great multitude of devotees along with her.

Port Said lies just above high-water mark; a flat, sandy settlement, that blisters in the sun, and withers in the sea-winds, and has every drop of its drinking water pumped over from Ismailia, fifty miles away. But, withal, it is a healthful spot, and a capital resort for sportsmen, who find pelicans, flamingoes, herons, and multitudinous wild-fowl in the neighboring lake—that jewel strung upon the silver thread

of the Canal. About the third hour in the afternoon, half the town seemed to be drifting to the water-side; the other half offered its services as porter — as if it were expected that no man in his right mind would stay on shore a moment longer than was absolutely necessary.

When I boarded the steamer, her deck was swarming with Orientals, and the spectacle was positively bewildering; strange races, gathered from strange lands, reclined upon thick rugs among cushions that fitted every angle of their bodies, while they smoked the perpetual nargileh. They talked, smoked, and sang a good part of the night in the full flood of the moon, with the *swish* of the water under our keel for a running accompaniment. The potent odor of garlic that graced the frequent repast was lost in the more potent effluvia of burning hasheesh; but there were other smells not to be forgotten, and scarcely to be forgiven, such as are the bane of all sea-travel on that much betraveled coast.

It was after mid-Lent, when half the world goes to Jerusalem for Holy Week and Easter; so that we were in very truth pilgrims and strangers. Many a poor fellow who climbed over the ship's side while we lay in the mouth of the Canal found he had arrived too late by an hour or two, and now his bed must needs be made in whatever obscure corner might



still be left unoccupied; he was exposed to drafts and the spray that sifted over us from time to time, and all the night his sleep was disturbed by the passage of officers and crew, who stepped or stumbled over him at brief intervals.

Some of the wise old pilgrims were on board almost as soon as the ship came to anchor at Port Said; having chosen the best possible quarters for themselves, they spread their carpets and cushions, and literally went to house-keeping, meanwhile observing the despair of the late comers with the placid philosophy of the Oriental. Their pipes were lighted, their coffee brought them by their faithful slaves; they seemed to lack nothing, yet they were deck passengers, who paid less than a third of the passage money that brought us to the brink of despair in the close and overcrowded cabin. Fortunately, the sun that set on us at Port Said rose on us at Jaffa; and, though our ship was overladen, and positively top-heavy, so that at times she careened fearfully, the sea was as glass; the full moon made night glorious, and we held our course right bravely; it seemed almost as if Providence had a special smile for the thousands who were on their way to Jerusalem that memorable night.

It was a memorable night. I woke about two in the morning, after one of those incoher-

ent dreams that are apt to precede an event. The hour was wonderful, the air delicious but moist, as the sea-air always is. The full moon flooded the deep; a broad wake of glittering silver rolled in the midst of the violet-tinted waves. Every soul slept, or seemed to be sleeping, wrapped in blankets like mummies, and stowed side by side. Even the few watchers on deck stood motionless as statues. Egypt lay all behind me; the overpowering splendor of the Nile recurred to me as a gorgeous dream from which I had scarcely yet awakened. I began to realize that on the morrow, God willing, we should all set foot on sacred soil at Jaffa—the antique Joppa, said by Pliny to have been standing before the flood;—Jaffa, on whose rock-bound shore Andromeda was chained when Perseus flew to rescue her. St.

Jerome says: "I saw the remains of the chains wherewith Andromeda was bound to the rock until delivered by Perseus from the sea-monster." Through the Roman period, and down to the close of the 16th century, these chains were treasured and exhibited in Jaffa.

I dozed again; by and by an unusual commotion in the ship awakened me, and, looking out



through my small dim sidelight, I saw the saffron-tinted East, with its luminous sea and sky divided by a line of shadowy hills; shadowy indeed they were and empurpled, touched here and there with the faintest radiance—the promises of dawn; then my heart cried out: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!” In the midst of that joyous cry the sun rose and filled the world with light—it was my first glimpse of the Holy Land.

Jaffa! Abbé Geramb declares that Jaffa—or Joppa, if you prefer it—was so called from Japheth, the son of Noah, who came down from Ararat in the track of the subsiding flood, and founded a city that is to-day one of the most interesting and best-abused in the world.

I wonder why so many travelers feel justified in snubbing Jaffa?

The traffic of half a hemisphere drifts to this little port, and is borne from ship to shore in the arms of Stalwart Arabs. And what a history it has! It was to Jaffa that Hiram, King of Tyre, sent the cedars of Lebanon, “in floats,” for the building of Solomon’s Temple. Here Jonah, when he “rose up to flee from the presence of the Lord, . . . .



found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it," while the sea-monster lay in wait for him upon the verge of the horizon. Here St. Peter saw the vision of things common and unclean, and Tabitha was raised from the dead.

Jaffa has lived a thousand lives, and died a thousand deaths. It has been taken and retaken again and again; has been reduced to a mere cluster of reed-huts; built up anew, and walled about, until, to-day a city of eight thousand souls, it has outgrown its original limits, has a thriving colony of Germans in one suburb, and had a colony of Americans in another once upon a time; but that enterprise was not successful.

Jaffa figures in the campaigns of Sennacherib, the Maccabees, the Roman Cestius, Vespasian, Saladin, Safaddin, Richard Cœur de Lion, the Knights of St. John, and Napoleon I.

These reflections, founded upon the diligent conning of numerous text-books of travel, were uppermost in my mind when our anchor plunged into the waves that wash the walls of Jaffa, and the chain whizzed after it with the most welcome music known to the ear of the fagged voyager. Every soul was astir, jostling his neighbor impetuously, rolling his luggage or his cigarette with uncommon enthusiasm, and hailing the bright morning and the

blossoming shore with exclamations of delight. Jaffa was in all its glory—a pyramid of flat roofs and white walls girdled by a flashing sea. Between us and the shore a broken reef gnashed its teeth and covered itself with foam. Through the jaws of this reef we were all to pass in boats that danced upon the waves like corks, and coquetted with the steamer for an hour or more before they got well to work.

Jaffa has no harbor and no dock; it is not an uncommon fate for the steamers that arrive frequently during the week to be driven off shore by unfavorable weather; in which case all their pilgrim passengers are taken up the coast and down again, with the hope of making land in due course of time. We were congratulated upon our good fortune in being able to start for the shore as soon as the exasperating boat-boys could be brought to reasonable terms. It was an affair of much bargaining, pleading, threatening; for there are no fixed prices in that delectable land. It was, to my mind, a matter of very great uncertainty also, inasmuch as we heard that a boat had been dashed to pieces on the reef only a week previous, and five unlucky souls sent to their reckoning betimes.

A constant stream of barges, great and small, passed to and fro; we knew by the wild shouts of the oarsmen when they had shot the

reef in safety; we knew by the frantic gesticulations of the Arabs in the returning boats that they were ready for another bout at a bargain; and so two or three hours passed by, while the sun grew hot, the fragrance of orange groves was wafted over the sea to us, and we came to terms at last.

We dropped into one of the boats at the lucky moment when she swung up to the ship's ladder on the crest of a wave; gathered our luggage unto us, berated the half-naked boatmen for their greed in seek-

ing to encumber us with more passengers than seemed to us desirable or safe, and then, heading for the water-gate of Jaffa, we bounded over the waves in splendid style, making a brilliant passage of the reef, with just a dash of spray in our faces, and a crash of billows thundering in our ears. Ten minutes later we swung up to the



slippery rocks at the threshold of the water-gate, where a dragoman welcomed us in good English, and directed us to the great Latin convent close at hand.

Perhaps the confusion at the water-gate, coupled with the demand for passports, and the din of voices, drove from my mind for the time being every thought of the land I had at last reached in safety,—at least I must confess that my first thought was of shelter and my second of refreshment; for we had all been fasting during the last fourteen hours and more.

A little company sought the door of the convent, and beat long and loud for admittance; it was like trying to take a fortress with one's fists, but we took it at last. A grave, good-natured soul opened the door, and led the way through deep, dark courts; up dingy stairways; along gloomy corridors; over flying galleries that joined house-top to house-top, and made the huge building accessible in every part, though it were vain to think of finding one's way about alone.

This convent is capable of sheltering a thousand pilgrims; it is often filled; this is pretty sure to be the case about Easter, when the pious pilgrims to the Holy City find Jaffa the most convenient port of entry or of exit. Rooms were discovered away up on one of the high terraces,—large, airy rooms, with groined

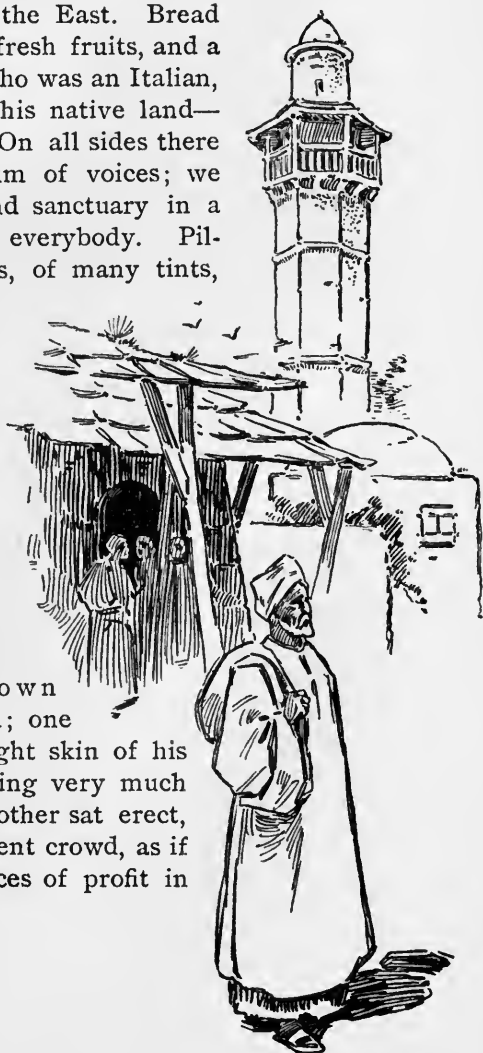
ceilings, and deep windows grated like prison-cells. Crucifixes and holy pictures hung upon the walls; the beds were narrow but clean, the floors tiled and well swept. This was indeed solid comfort after our cramped, ill-smelling quarters on ship-board.

The sea broke under the walls of the monastery far, far below us, and its music filled every part of the great, rambling building. Oh, how we laughed at our recent perplexities, and congratulated ourselves upon being so finely housed! Four Franciscan monks direct the army quartered under their charitable roof. It is, indeed, charitable; for those who are able to pay for shelter and refreshment give whatsoever seemeth to them fit, while those who are poor come and go without money and without price.—Let it be borne in mind that there are many who beg their way to Jerusalem, carrying neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes, but going forth as lambs among wolves; and, for the most part, it seems that even the most lamb-like is capable of making way with a wolf's share of everything.

At breakfast we met two or three acquaintances, who came in from some remote corner of the monastery, and seemed glad to find familiar faces in so strange a place. One is always running upon friends in Eastern travel: those whom one has known at hotels, or in



ships' cabins, or on railway trains—for there are railways even in the East. Bread and wine and eggs, fresh fruits, and a chat with the friar—who was an Italian, and glad to speak of his native land—restored our souls. On all sides there was a perpetual hum of voices; we seemed to have found sanctuary in a beehive, so busy was everybody. Pilgrims of many types, of many tints, and of many creeds, hurried to and fro, making ready for the journey to Jerusalem. An Italian, with a barrel organ and two performing dogs, sat in the court awaiting the movements of the caravan which it was his purpose to join. Those dogs seemed weighed down with worldly wisdom; one lay quietly on the tight skin of his master's drum, looking very much bored with life; the other sat erect, and eyed the turbulent crowd, as if calculating the chances of profit in that latitude.

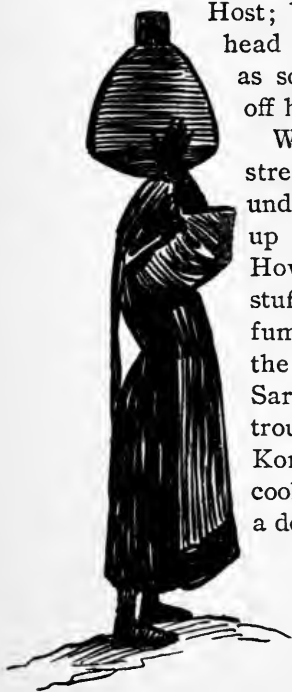


MOSQUE AT JAFFA.

A chapel door stood open in the court. Mass was being said within, but the crowd was so dense that it was quite impossible to enter, or even to approach the threshold. People swathed in the cumbrous costumes of the East bowed before the altar, and swelled the chant in a confusion of tongues. It was hard to realize that the veiled women and the turbaned men were Christians, assisting at the Sacrifice of the Mass, which was there offered precisely as it is daily offered in our far-off homes. To be sure, each man wore his fez in chapel, and it was not even lifted at the Elevation of the

Host; but the fez is never lifted from the head under any circumstances: one would as soon think of doffing his wig as taking off his fez at Mass.

What a stroll it was through the narrow streets of Jaffa,—the streets that shoot under the houses like tunnels, and run up and down hills like pairs of stairs! How the bazaars glowed with colored stuffs, and made the air sweet with perfumes that no seal can imprison! How the water splashed and gurgled in the old Saracenic fountain, with its marble troughs, and its golden verses from the Koran! What a chosen spot that was, cooled by the bubbling water, where half a dozen streets ran together, and the fan-





THE HARBOR OF JAFFA, FROM SIMON THE TANNER'S HOUSE.

tastic bazaars grouped themselves in a circle about it, under the shelter of vines and fig-trees! There the twang of traffic is softened in the smoke-clouds of the nargilehs, and every bargain soothed with numberless small cups of coffee as black as ink and as thick as mud. All the sunshine of the East pours upon this devoted nook; whoso visits Jaffa has visited it in vain unless he knows what it is to linger for an hour within the charmed circle of

its antique fountain over against the Jerusalem Gate—a gate that has been wrested from the hinges long since—listening to the drone of the buyers and sellers; sipping coffee and smoking *Jehil*; while he dreams of the Holy City beyond the plains of Sharon, over and beyond the mountains of Ephraim,—dreams of Jerusalem, and delays his *départure* because of the inexpressible pleasure of that dream.

I wonder if it is really the house of Simon the tanner that overhangs the sea? Of course, we went to spy it out. A Syrian woman, with her face uncovered (though most of them are veiled), led us through a small court into a small chamber glaring with whitewash; there was nothing visible but four bare walls, a floor, and a ceiling. By a flight of narrow and steep stone steps we ascended to the flat roof surrounded by a parapet. A fig-tree threw its gaunt arms above it, decked with a few great leaves, and one of these I captured as a trophy; below the wall spread the great sea westward and northward toward the "Isles of Chittim."

Here began the vexatious debate as to the authenticity of the shrines in Palestine. Of the thousands and tens of thousands that are called holy, very few are above suspicion. There are those who question the most authentic, who make the tour of the East snarl-

ing as they go, and whose demeanor in places the most sacred in the eyes of the faithful is indelicate and inexcusable; there are those who, with wide-staring eyes, believe blindly, and who are in a kind of dumb ecstasy so long as their feet press holy soil. Judge who among these is the worthier pilgrim, and let us dismiss the subject forever.

From the roof of Simon's house the charms of Jaffa are displayed to the best advantage. The town is thoroughly Oriental: it could not be transplanted, even in its smallest sections, into any other land without at once being marked as an alien. Old as it is in one sense, it is very fresh and young in another. The Jaffa of to-day is lusty with the stirring life of travel; through its narrow and crooked streets stream the caravans of the world. The eyes of all the nations of the earth have turned to it with joy; the feet of myriads of pilgrims have waded, and will forever wade, in its summer dust, its winter mire.

The sea, freighted with fleets, sings under its weather-beaten walls on the one hand, while famed gardens, sweet with the odors of unplucked grapes, oranges, pomegranates, peaches and figs, hem it about with bowers of perpetual shade upon the other.

Yonder stands Lydda, where St. Paul healed Æneas, where St. George was born, where



the lion-hearted Richard pitched his camp.  
Beautiful Ramleh, with its  
splendid tower, is farther on,  
by the green Plains of Sharon.

Herod and Samson and David knew all this  
beauty.

Jaffa grows younger and more populous day  
by day. You see unmistakable evidences of  
this in the aptitude of its people, the foreign  
element in its suburbs, its numerous hotels and  
agencies, and the brisk, busy air that keeps all  
its streets astir from dawn to dark.

But few of the old traditions are left to it.  
In the month of May there is a festival when  
the Jaffites go out into their delicious groves  
singing of Tabitha, Dorcas, the gazelle. I  
wonder do they think on the time when  
"widows stood weeping, and showing the coats  
and garments which Dorcas had made while she  
was yet with them"? We thought of it, and of  
many things, as we sat on the house-top, and  
saw the sun set and the evening creep on

apace. Evening—the soft Syrian evening, filled with brilliant stars! It reminded us that we were to set forth at sunrise, so, slowly and reluctantly, we returned to our house of refuge—the great, peaceful fortress that seemed to fill half the town, having over its door the inscription familiar to so many eyes, “*Hospitalium Latium*,” and there we found dinner and a welcome. All night the sea sang to us a solemn song; long we lay awake listening to it, and thinking of the morrow, when we were to begin our pilgrimage in very truth.

Jaffa, called by the Hebrews “the Beautiful,” may not seem beautiful to all; but Jaffa under the rosy dawn of the first day in Holy Land, and Jaffa star-lit and lulled to sleep by the lapping waves of the Mediterranean, on the eve of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem the Golden, is a city of most precious memory, even though it be in the land of the Philistines!



### III.

#### GOING UP TO JERUSALEM.



As for our Caravan, there were three of us in the saddle at sunrise; a fourth, the indispensable donkey-boy, footed it in the rear of a diminutive beast, that staggered and halted under a small mountain of luggage. As we rode off in the broad sandy road that leads into the Plains of Sharon, we were joined by multitudes of pilgrims of every creed and color; for the most sacred of cities is holy in the eyes of the whole civilized world.

On every side bloomed the rich gardens of



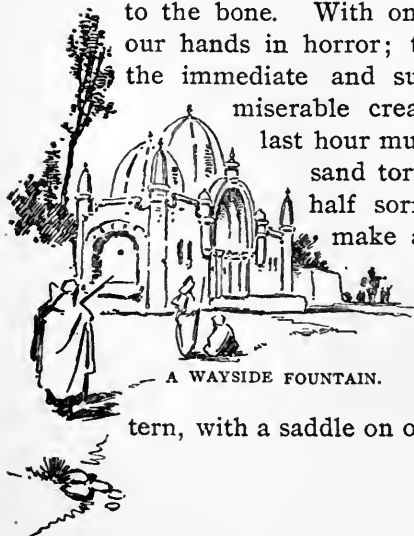
Jaffa; again and again the splash of the water-wheel fell musically upon our ears, telling the secret of the perennial beauty of the groves through which we were joyously passing. Tall cypresses, feathery *mimosas*, and gigantic cacti threw cool shadows across our path; the royal palm waved its sable plumes above the roadside fountains; camels knelt to rest with a look of pitiful resignation saddening their liquid eyes; gorgeously clad pilgrims dismounted in the fragrant shade, spread their mats upon the sward, and restored their souls with the beguiling fumes of the nargileh.

We were hastening to the most sacred and most solemn city in the world; we were seeking it at a season when the Passion and Death of Him who died that we might live are celebrated with the utmost pomp and splendor; yet we laughed and chatted gaily, made friends with our neighbors in the next caravan, dashed ahead in a trial of speed that seemed to interest everybody on the road, and in the course of an hour came to grief.

It was discovered that one of our animals was an invalid and that there was small prospect of his living to reach Jerusalem. Here was a dilemma; but E——, our fair companion on many a voyage of discovery, bore up against the odds with feminine fortitude. All had been going moderately well, barring a sus-

picion of impending evil, and we entered into the spirit of enthusiasm that inspired everybody; but when E——'s nag halted suddenly, and began to kick with all-fours simultaneously, and without intermission, threatening every moment to throw himself and his rider into the ditch, we held a consultation, and impatiently awaited the arrival of our donkey-boy, who was by this time far, far behind us down the dusty road.

Meanwhile, E——'s saddle was looked to; we surrounded the obstreperous nag in a body, loosened the girths, and made an examination: the saddle was good enough in its way, but the back of that objectionable beast blossomed like the rose—it was positively raw to the bone. With one accord we threw up our hands in horror; this was the signal for the immediate and successful flight of the miserable creature, who during the last hour must have endured a thousand tortures; and we were not half sorry when we saw him make a bee-line for Jaffa, his youth renewed, and he speeding upon the very wings of the morning. Then we sat down by a cistern, with a saddle on our hands, and a serious



A WAYSIDE FOUNTAIN.

break in our journey. Pilgrims cantered past us in twos, and threes, and fives, and twenties, raising clouds of fine white dust that powdered us profusely. They were as amiable as we were not, but we consoled ourselves with the thought that perhaps their turn would come later in the day; for this sort of thing is always happening in the Orient.

Our donkey-boy, on his arrival, looked depressed, but accepted his fate with a resignation that was highly edifying, and taught us a lesson by the wayside. We hung our saddle upon a convenient bough, even as of old the willows were hung with harps. Neither could we sing in our day any more than they sang who sat by the waters of Babylon; but we did the best we could under the circumstances, and that was to mount E—— upon my horse, while I surmounted the luggage on the pack-animal, and the donkey-boy footed it back to Jaffa for reinforcements.

It took our united efforts to start the reorganized caravan; of course my donkey, missing his diligent driver, and with my weight added to his burden, spilt off on both sides of the road, and persisted in backing toward Jerusalem, while he was led at one end and pushed at the other, and I rolled about in my uneasy seat as if I were striding a barrel in a heavy sea.



A TOMB.

How truly it has been said that misery loves company! We were consoled by numerous mishaps during the journey, and saw with our own eyes girths breaking, saddles turning, luggage plunging into the dust, while from time to time the shrill cries of women assured us that we were not the only sufferers that day.

Our boy returned to us in good season, well mounted, and with a fund of spirits quite astonishing in a Syrian and a Mohammedan. He dashed down upon us at full speed, with a fierce shout of triumph, while many a face was turned toward him half in curiosity and half in fear, albeit this highway is to-day as free as any in the land; for the Bedouins have retreated into the mountain passes, and the desert beyond the mountains, and the Philistines are low in their grassy grave.

We entered the Plains of Sharon. The land rose and fell in long green waves. We looked

across these hillocks, treeless and almost without shrubs, though the gaunt cactus spread its thorny palms against the sun in the midst of the lonely fields. We tracked the road for miles and miles—a straight brown path dividing the meadows; sometimes we rode off into the wild corn, where cyclamens, anemones, roses, lilies, and tulips grew in profusion; anon we would dash on as swiftly as our tired steeds could carry us, until we reached an elevation, from which it was possible to view the wide horizon at a glance.

A few flocks were scattered about; pilgrims were still wending their way toward the goal we were all seeking; and afar off a nameless hamlet—a mere cluster of low brown huts—slept the sleep that knows no waking at the hands of pilgrim or stranger.

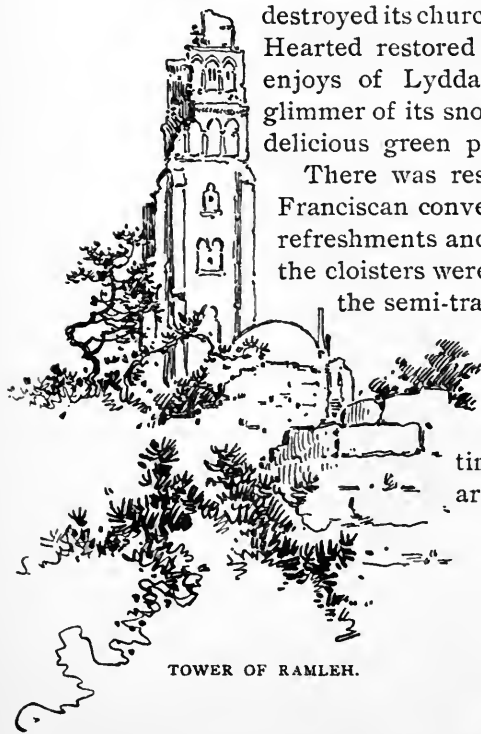
An early hour brought us to Ramleh—a small city with mosque domes and minarets, and a grove of drowsy palms;—a city hedged about with cacti, busy with bees and swallows, and musical with the lullaby of summer life. Ramleh is the Rose of Sharon, the joy of the pilgrim, and the beast that bears him; for Ramleh is a place of refreshment and of rest.

Ramleh is thought to be Ramah of the Old Testament and Arimathea of the New: but this is an open question. From the high windows of a crumbling tower of the Crusaders—

perhaps the finest *souvenir* they have left us in that land—with the blue rim of the Mediterranean in the west, the mountains of Judea in the east, and the white walls of Lydda, or Ludd, in the northeast, and all the meadows fresh with fragrant rains, and rich with uncut corn waving below, one scarcely pauses to question whether Samuel really judged the people in this very town, or if the Hebrew Elders assembled here to demand a king.

Lydda, the distant town, was the birthplace of England's St. George—at least, so it is reported there; though, according to Metaphrastes, he was born in Cappadocia. Saladin destroyed its church; Richard the Lion-Hearted restored it; but all that one enjoys of Lydda to-day is the fine glimmer of its snow-white walls in the delicious green prairies of Sharon.

There was rest for us in the old Franciscan convent at Ramleh, after refreshments and a pipe. How still the cloisters were, and how charming the semi-transparent shadows in the vine-roofed courts, and the coffee on the house-top just before setting forth again! There are Germans settled



TOWER OF RAMLEH.

at Ramleh; they have an inn, and a wagon that runs between Jaffa and Jerusalem, and is a great convenience when one is weary or afraid of the saddle; but, somehow, this wagon always drops its passengers at that German inn, both going and coming, whether



CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE.

they will or no; and, though it is a good enough inn, it is not so good or so proper or so picturesque a hospice as the beautiful old monastery. They miss it who pass through Ramleh without at least a glance into the hospitable abode of the Franciscans.

The noonday nap at Ramleh ended, we remounted our animals while they still munched the fresh-cut grass, and were soon jogging up the long, long road leading to the

Holy City. Most of the caravans of the day had passed us—we were taking it leisurely. A little troop of horsemen in the distance was all that gave life to the quiet afternoon landscape; a few larks carolled to us in the upper air, and the bright blue sky bent over us; but an almost oppressive silence prevailed, and the land seemed deserted. No wonder! this was the plain of Sharon; those lonely fields were once peopled by twenty millions of people,



THE WATCH TOWERS.



where now there are scarcely a tenth part as many. The earth mourneth and languisheth, indeed; and Sharon is become a wilderness.

The road ascended into a hilly district somewhat wilder than that through which we had just passed. Shortly we began to note upon the hill-tops great square watch-towers of dark stone, and then we knew that, though we were on a thoroughfare which for four thousand years has been the highway between Jerusalem and the sea-coast, these towers were erected as a protection—they date chiefly from the period of the Crusades—and not many years ago it was a perilous venture to seek the Sacred City unless accompanied by a considerable number of lancers.

Up, up, up, and still up, over the hills that began to fatigue our animals, we slowly approached the highlands, among which, twenty-six hundred feet above the sea, stands Jerusalem. The evening shadows gathered about us; the cool dew fell copiously; crickets sang in the long grass by the road-side, and the noise of our horses' stumbling hoofs grew louder and louder in the intensified stillness of the gathering dusk. Even the neighboring watch-towers look unfriendly, standing bleakly against the darkening sky. It was thus, weary, hungry, and a little loath to drag ourselves



THE SYRIAN KHAN.

into the threatening mountains, that we came to Bab-el-Wady, the gate of the valley.

We were at the mouth of a deep ravine; the road speedily buried itself in dense groves, and was utterly lost to view beyond a sudden

bend. The clouds hung low about the steep and rugged mountains, and threatened rain; it was already chilly and damp: why should we venture farther on such a night?

A stone khan, the inn of the Orient, stood close upon the road-side to the right; across the way a thatched roof gave shelter to a company of muleteers. The place was swarming with pilgrims; camels, horses, and asses were staked out in the grass about the khan; fires were blazing, and several camps were busy discussing the evening meal of black-bread and



A PAN OF COALS AND A SAUCEPAN.

oil and lentils. It was marvelously picturesque, but it was likewise a trifle cold, and so we gave our animals into the hands of a retainer—our donkey-boy was, of course, not due before midnight—and climbed into the upper story of the khan to look for shelter.

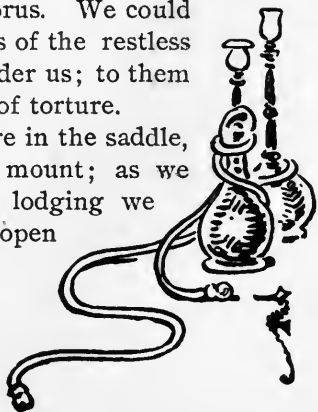
There were four huge rooms above with vaulted ceilings, and narrow, deep-set windows, that looked as if they had been built with an eye to security in war time. There were stone floors also, and a little rickety furniture of the rudest description; a feeble light disclosed a cupboard at one end of the main room; it was scantily furnished with stale bread, and wine and oil and eggs; the eggs fortunately were fresh, and to these we looked for life enough to bear us to Jerusalem on the morrow. We ordered a pot of coals from a Syrian Jew, who served us civilly; a saucepan came next; we broke the eggs into the pan, and flooded them with oil; one of us held the long handle of the saucepan, another stirred the contents with a spoon, I fanned the flames with my broad-brimmed hat, and the result was gratifying. With bread sopped in oil, eggs in some nameless shape, and thin sour wine we made an admirable supper; then we threw ourselves on three hard lounges—stretchers they might have been called with more propriety—where soon the long pulls and the strong pulls which

we took at our nargilehs made bubbling music far into the night. This is the extent of the entertainment afforded by an Oriental inn; one must travel with everything one needs in that country; the markets are scattered and uncertain, and the heaviest purse not so long as the tongue of the extortionate marketman.

What an experience that was! I dozed at intervals, but awoke again and again, to find my comrade still drawing scented bubbles through the water-bowl of his Turkish pipe; he may have smoked incessantly till daybreak; at any rate, he was a complete convert to the forms of his adopted country, Syria, and had at his tongue's end modern Greek, Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, beside the chief languages of Europe; and he was only two and twenty.

Meanwhile, the beasts in the stable under us stamped about to keep warm; jingled their little bells, and awoke their masters, who chided them not unkindly; sometimes a donkey lifted up his voice in agonizing gasps, and then we all reviled him in chorus. We could frequently hear the vexed cries of the restless and uncomfortable sleepers under us; to them it must have been a long night of torture.

Long before daybreak we were in the saddle, yet we were not the first to mount; as we went forth from our dreary lodging we found coffee boiling over an open



fire in the muleteers' camp, pipes alight, pilgrims stirring sleepily, and animals of all kinds pawing the ground and whinnying impatiently.

Some of our fellow-pilgrims were encumbered with all their worldly possessions; one donkey staggered under a mountain of featherbeds, atop of which a fat matron rode astride, while on each side of the diminutive beast swung a pannier full of small children. The lord and master of this mountain of domestic prosperity footed it in the rear of his caravan, keeping a sharp eye on his precious freight. A single false step of the little donkey that trudged sturdily along before, might have widowed him and rendered him childless at one fell swoop. He had slept with his little family down among the cattle—perhaps because “there was no room for him in the inn.” Such was our first night in a Syrian khan.

Over the hills of Palestine we held our course. The way was dark, and the morning bitter cold; thick clouds were continually rushing across the moon. We entered a deep and densely wooded ravine; it was filled with mysterious shadows, and swept by occasional currents of cold, damp air. Higher and higher we climbed, until at last we came to the bald summit of the mountains, where the wind was piercing, and we were soon chilled to the bone.

Day broke at last, and was hailed with acclamations. We pressed on over the winding road, that sometimes buried itself out of sight in the dark valleys, and sometimes climbed zigzag up a steep hill-side among the terraces that are so common in Syria. All these hills are belted with stone terraces,—a dozen, fifteen, thirty of them, one above another, damming up the thin soil which otherwise would be washed into the bed of the valley. Olives—gray old trees, as naked and forlorn as some of the monsters to which Doré in his illustration of Dante was fond of giving a half-human form; olives—great, straggling orchards of them—sycamores, and a few palms crown these terraces, and partially hide the ugly ruggedness of the land.

The hills of Palestine are covered with stones that lie thickly on the top of the soil; one might easily imagine that a shower of rock had once deluged the country. These rocks are easily thrown together in rude walls, the soil above them leveled even with their tops; and thus the hills become giant stairways leading to the low-hanging clouds.

Hour after hour we followed the road as it wound among the hills. A sharp shower drove us into a rude shelter by the wayside, where for the time being we were housed with cattle and barnyard fowls; dripping pilgrims has-

tened to join us, and together we stood waiting fairer weather. The road was slippery after this, and more than once our animals came near to unseating us. Again and again the landscape was



PILGRIMS.



veiled with mist; other showers, following the first, overtook us when we were beyond the reach of shelter, and there was nothing for us to do but to continue our course in solemn silence, while the rain streamed from our hat brims into our laps.

So we came into the Valley of Aijalon, and remembered how Joshua said: "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." A little later our eyes fell upon the pretty village of Abu Gash, so called from the robber chief who reigned there for a quarter of a century, in defiance of the Turkish powers. There the Ark of the Covenant rested twenty years; there Jeremiah was born—perhaps; or perhaps the village of Anathoth has prior claim to the honor of the Prophet's birth. A fine old church at the edge of the village still bears the name of the Prophet, though it is now a mere shell; its doorways half filled with fallen stones, and a rank growth of weeds possessing it.

After passing Abu Gash, we descended into the green valley of Elah; the hosts of the Amorites fled through this valley after their defeat at Betharam; and there the youthful David slung the pebble that sunk into the forehead of Goliath.

All these traditions came to the surface on the very spot, as we rode, hour after hour,

through the most interesting country of the globe; yet I fear none of them impressed us much at the time; at least not so much as they should have done, and certainly not so much as they have done a thousand times since, when in imagination we have revisited the scene.

There is a vast difference between one's acceptance of the facts of sacred history and the features of profane geography. The time had come, for me at least, to place one atop of the other, and mark how well they agreed; they do agree, no doubt, as well as any history and any geography of any age or nation. Indeed, I believe it easier for a man to accept the statements of the Bible literally after a pilgrimage to Palestine than before it. My chief trouble lay in the inability to realize that Scripture is a history that fits into every nook and corner of the land through which I was passing; it had never been brought home to me in this way before, and the palpable evidences of the authenticity of that marvelous book were so numerous and so complete as to be almost overwhelming. As a pilgrim, I accepted everything with a sometimes weak, but always unquestioning, faith; reserving to myself, however, the privilege of turning aside from time to time to let *faith* rest from its labors, and to give my mind to the forgetting

of much that is foolish, and not a little that is painful, in the unwise exhibition of shrines, and places or objects more or less holy.

As we were riding in the sun, which at last came forth to give us welcome, an official stopped our way; he was resplendent in voluminous blue trousers; a scarlet jacket crusted with gold embroidery; a turban, with a long silken tassel dangling between his shoulders, and a glittering cimeter of the most warlike and theatrical description. He had been dispatched to conduct us into the city; for my companions were people of distinction, and their approach was looked for by the Austrian Consul, whose private *kawwas* he was; the gorgeous personage above mentioned was at our disposal so long as we remained in the Holy City. One seldom goes abroad in the Orient without an escort of this character, though he is not always of this quality.

As we surmounted hill after hill, hoping ever to satisfy our eyes with a sight of the city we had come so far to see, yet still seeing it not, our hearts failed us; again and again we arrived

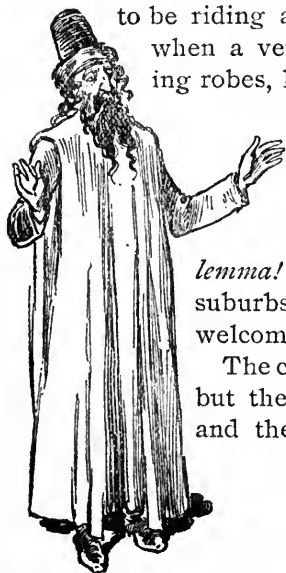


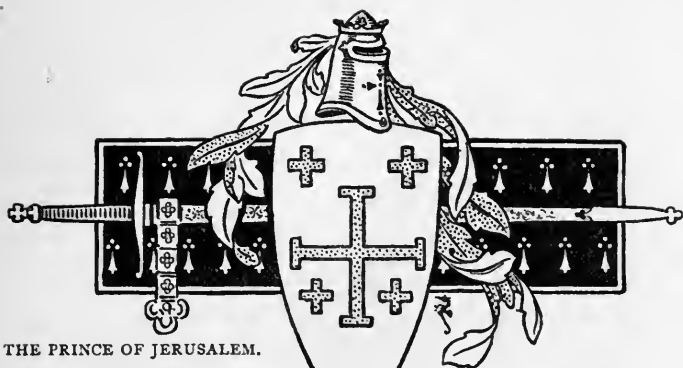
A GORGEOUS PERSON.

silently at a summit, nervous with anticipation, breathless with unfeigned emotion, and each of us eager to be the first who should hail the vision of those memorable walls. Again and again we saw beyond us another valley and another hill; the *kazwas*, with ill-judged kindness, encouraged us in the belief that each hill-top was the last, until, almost in despair, we reined in our horses, and proceeded at a lazy pace, quite indifferent to our surroundings.

Our excitement had entirely subsided; we were half famished, and thoroughly fatigued. In this state, almost unconsciously, we approached a group of quite new buildings,—a straggling village in a bare, bleak, forbidding landscape, under a gray, cold sky. I chanced to be riding a little in advance of our party, when a venerable Polish Jew, in long-flowing robes, high hat, and with the stiff ringlets of his race dangling before his ears, gravely saluted me; at this moment our *kazwas* dashed forward, and in a shrill voice exclaimed, "*Ecce Gerusalemma!*" We were indeed within the suburbs of the Holy City, and our first welcome was from a Polish Jew.

The city walls were not yet visible, but the domes of the Mosque of Omar and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre





THE PRINCE OF JERUSALEM.

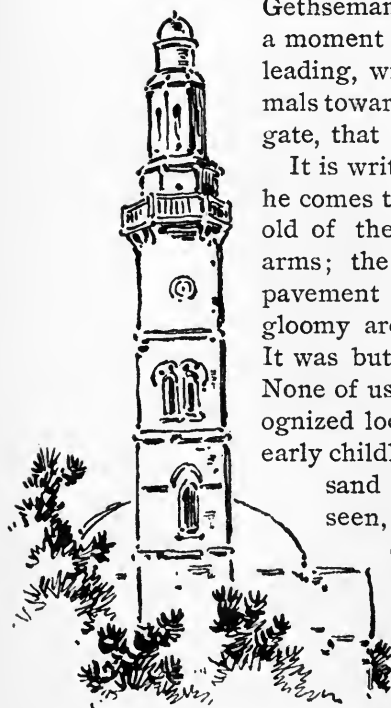
at once met our gaze, and we turned to one another with glances of recognition, but without uttering a word.

Let me confess that I had pictured myself, at the moment when I first beheld this sacred spot, falling with my forehead to the earth, and watering the sod with tears; when that hour arrived I was in no humor to do anything of the sort. The scene had not burst upon me with overwhelming beauty or majesty or solemnity. The village without the walls was unattractive, and, moreover, we had approached the Jaffa Gate, which of all the gates is perhaps the least impressive; however, we did not enter there, but, following the wall to the left, passed down under its shadow, and came into the edge of a narrow vale fringed with Mohammedan graves.

We were seeking St. Stephen's Gate. Over the wall of the city loomed the superb dome of

Omar's Mosque; to the left lay a small garden on a sloping hill; above the garden, on the summit of the hill, stood a solitary chapel, walled about, having a tower and a prospect over olive groves, and across the narrow vale at our feet, upon the long sweep of wall and all the domes and minarets of the Sacred City. This vision dawned upon us as we turned the corner of the wall, and with it, suddenly, like a blinding flash, came the thought, Jerusalem, the Valley of Jehosaphat, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Mount of Olives! In a moment we were upon the ground, leading, with trembling hand, our animals toward the gate, the most precious gate, that opens upon Gethsemane.

It is written, "The King walks when he comes to Zion." At the worn threshold of the gate the guards presented arms; the muskets clanged upon the pavement as we passed out of the gloomy archway into a narrow street. It was but a step to the Via Dolorosa. None of us had yet spoken; as we recognized localities familiar to us from early childhood, by reason of the thousand prints and pictures we had seen, we sometimes exchanged quick glances, but this was all. Each paler than com-



MINARET OF OMAR.

mon, a kind of nervous tremor possessed us, and we were dumb with awe.

Passing up the Via Dolorosa, under the Ecce Homo Arch, we approached the hospice, whose charity had already set our rooms in order, and laid the cloth for our welcome meal.

During the hours that followed but one thought was in my mind; it filled my heart with unspeakable gratitude, for it was a prophecy again fulfilled; it was the refrain sung over and over again to the wild throbbing of my pulse—"Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem!"

#### IV.

#### IMPRESSIONS OF JERUSALEM.

Behold the Field of the Mosque of Omar! Standing upon the Mount of Olives, with the familiar panorama of Jerusalem spread out before you, the first object that attracts the eye, and the one that is sure to hold it longest,

is the Haram-esh-Sherif—the Field of the Mosque of Omar. It is bordered on two sides by the ancient and pic-

turesque walls of the city. It hangs upon the brink of the valley of the Kedron—Jehoshaphat—a narrow and not very deep ravine, dotted with Moslem tombs.

It absorbs for a time the attention of the pilgrim; for its traditions are as startling, as attractive, as fan-



ECCE HOMO ARCH.





SOLOMON'S STABLES.

tastic as any within the range of human knowledge.

Mount Zion, though it overtops the world in the imagination of the Christian, is, after all, only a little hill, and by no means impressive; but the Field of the Mosque of Omar is at once the pedestal and the pylon of the most brilliant epochs in the history of all time.

The platform of the Temple—that is, the field itself—is partly artificial, the southeast corner being supported by a hundred massive columns twenty-eight feet in height; these columns are roofed over, and the roof is covered with soil and grass; it is, in fact, a part of

the great field of the Temple, stretching out to the city wall above Kedron valley. The damp and gloomy vaults beneath are called Solomon's stables. Tradition, that runs wild in the Orient, and embarrasses history whenever



WINDOWS LIKE CAGES.

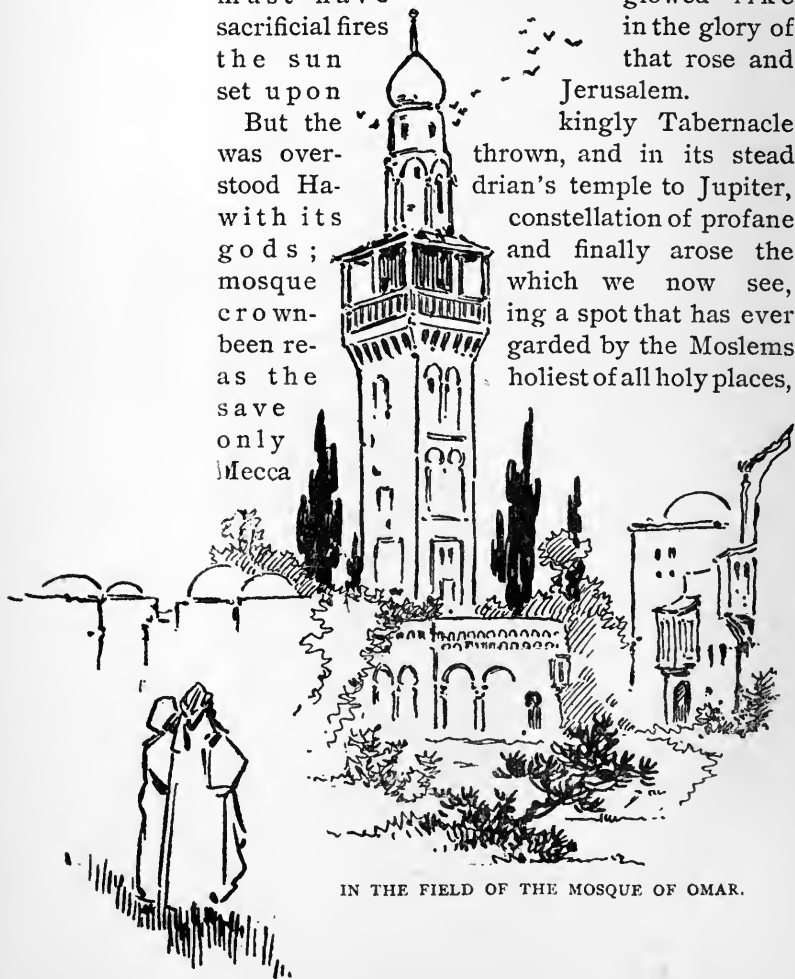
it is possible, ascribes the origin of these subterranean chambers to demons.

But is there a corner of the earth more crowded with interest than the enclosed field above these vaults—the field of the Temple, or of the Mosque of Omar? Here is the most beautiful of mosques; here are prayer-shrines, cypress and olive trees in clusters, and the great gate called the “Golden,” long since walled up, and not to be reopened till the Day of Judgment, when the Judge shall enter by it. There are long rows of dwellings, standing with backs to the field, upon the north and west; there are colonades, deep porches, latticed windows clinging to the walls like huge bird-cages, and a lesser mosque, called El Aksa, near the southern wall.

Upon this spot Abraham offered sacrifices; David raised an altar; Solomon, as if by enchantment, conjured his marvelous Temple. A second temple sprang from the ruins of the first; a third—King Herod’s—followed that, and much of the latter is preserved to this day. For the site of these structures the slope of the hill was walled up, and filled in over the valleys of Jehoshaphat on the east, Hinnom on the south, and Zyropæon on the west. In the Porch of Solomon, under the last of the temples, looking out upon Olivet, Our Blessed Savior walked. At the Temple sat

the money-changers, and the sellers  
 of doves and ewe lambs; and in  
 those days the gold and precious  
 stones that decorated the sacred edifices  
 must have glowed like  
 sacrificial fires in the glory of  
 the sun that rose and  
 set upon Jerusalem.

But the kingly Tabernacle  
 was overthrown, and in its stead  
 stood Hadrian's temple to Jupiter,  
 with its constellation of profane  
 gods; and finally arose the  
 mosque which we now see,  
 crowning a spot that has ever  
 been regarded by the Moslems  
 as the holiest of all holy places,  
 save only Mecca.



IN THE FIELD OF THE MOSQUE OF OMAR.

Eight gates in the western wall of the Haram-esh-Sherif admit you to the green enclosure. These gates stand open, and people are continually passing in and out; but the few foreigners who enter are invariably accompanied by the necessary official, the *kawwas*, who is in reality a chief of police, though he acts as your guide or dragoman.

The irregular quadrangle within the gates is about five hundred and thirty yards in length by three hundred and fifty in breadth. The field is littered with pavilions, prayer-niches, and Mohammedan shrines, that seem to have been scattered hither and yon with reckless extravagance. Beautiful little domes, like rainbow-tinted bubbles, are poised upon clusters of slender columns of porphyry, serpentine, or alabaster; these columns are moulded like wax, and set upon marble floors, open to the sun and the wind, and all winged and wandering tribes of the air. They are, for the most part, filthy and neglected, yet one must approach them in his stocking-feet, or with his boots thrust into loose slippers, or bundled up in newspaper, like packages from the butcher; for each and all of these pavilions are holy in the eyes of the Mohammedans, and are guarded with fanatical zeal.

At one end of the field is a small mosque, which was originally a chapel erected by

Justinian to the honor of the Blessed Virgin. Alas! how it has been stripped of every symbol of Christian love and reverence! A footprint of Our Lord is shown there, and a tomb is pointed out as that of the sons of Aaron. A niche in a subterranean chapel is called the Cradle of Christ; tradition says here dwelt the aged Simeon, and here the Blessed Virgin spent some days after the Presentation in the Temple.



Putting on our shoes, we followed the wall until we came to the Beautiful Gate, now generally called, through an odd but easy error, the Golden Gate. The Arabs have walled it up against invaders, and placed under it a prayer-niche; yet, in spite of these precautions, a superstition prevails that a Christian

Conqueror will enter by that gate some Friday in the hereafter, and retake the Holy City. Heaven speed the new Crusade! for in the days of the old ones

this gate was thrown open on Palm Sunday to admit the multitudes coming over from the Mount

of Olives, bearing palm branches, and strewing their garments in the way.

Not far from the gate is a chamber called the Throne of Solomon. It is said that, for all his glory, he died here, seated upon his throne, and supported by his staff. By this ruse, says the childish fable, the king hoped to conceal the knowledge of his death from the demons; and it was not until the worms had eaten through the staff, and the king had fallen headlong to the floor, that his death was discovered by the evil spirits, whom he held in bondage.

The windows of this mosque-like chamber are filled with rags, that have been torn from the garments of the Moslem pilgrims, and left as tributes. One continually meets with these tatters—bits of glass or tin, pieces of string, or in fact anything and everything that can be tied to a mosque window-grating, or to the trees near the tomb of a sheik, whose relics are held sacred.

The field of the Mosque of Omar fills one with disappointment and regret, there is such a waste of splendid material, and, in our eyes at least, a desecration unspeakable. There is a total lack of harmony in the grouping of the buildings, some of which are marvels of beauty and architectural grace. The trees seem to have grown by chance in the most inconven-

ient spots; an air of desolation broods over all; the place looks as if it had been devastated again and again—and so it has. Indeed, women might weep among these ruins, and

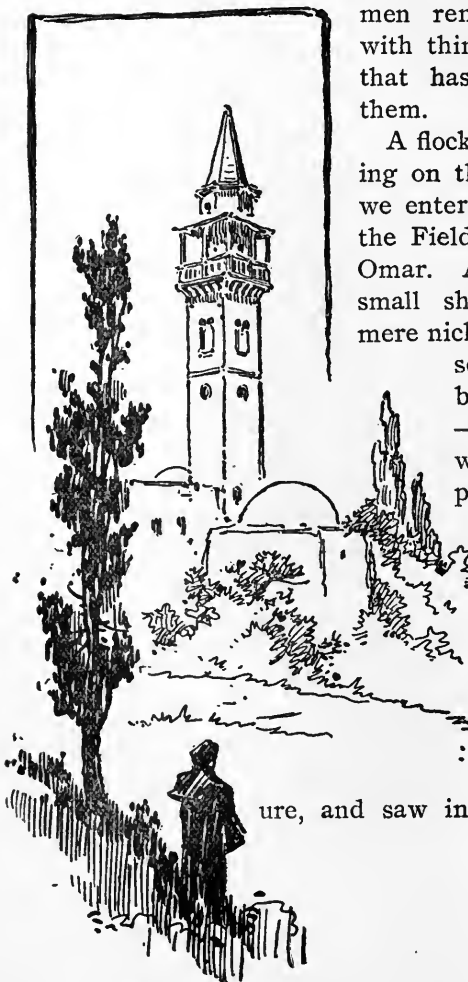
men rend their garments, with thinking of the glory that has departed out of them.

A flock of lambs was feeding on the young grass as we entered the chief gate of the Field of the Mosque of Omar. At one or two of the small shrines—they were mere niches like tombstones,

set up with their backs toward Mecca—Mohammedans were prostrated in prayer. A blue cloud of pigeons whirled over our heads, or buried themselves among the projecting cases of the deep windows in the walls above us.

We looked across the broad enclosure,

and saw in the centre of it a



THRONE OF SOLOMON.



temple so exquisitely proportioned and so splendidly tinted that one might easily imagine it some fairy pleasure-house cut from a single gem. On a pedestal stands the flat-roofed octagon, pierced with elaborately ornamented windows, set with marble panels and porcelain tiles, and the whole structure looking as fine and delicate as ivory.

A single dome seems to be floating in the air above the mysterious chamber,—a dome crusted with tiles that encase it like feathers or fish-scales; and the tiles are tinted with all the changeful shades of orange, violet, and green;—a dome that in the sunshine is as beautifully outlined and as splendidly dyed as the breast of a peacock. This is the Rubbetes-Sakhra—the Dome of the Rock, the Mohammedan Holy of Holies. Under the arcade that surrounds the mosque will hang the great scales that are to weigh the good and evil on the judgment day; within it is the rock itself,—a rock so venerated that no foot is permitted to tread it. We are constrained to approach it with our shoes off, and even so late as the Crimean War, it was worth a Christian's life to seek admission here. It is said that the Jews have never sought it, as they fear they may unwittingly defile their Holy of Holies.

The interior of the mosque is airy but

impressive. Elegant antique columns support the roof, and form a double circular isle. These columns differ in size and shape and color; some of them probably did service in the pagan temple; some may have stood in the very Temple of Solomon. One, at least, bears the symbol of our Redemption. A perpetual twilight floods the lofty dome; it is scarcely possible to distinguish the rich mosaics, the fantastic arabesques, the garlands of flowers, and the ancient Cufic inscriptions that run round the walls, whereon is written:

"Praise be to God, who has had no son or companion in His government, and who requires no helper to save Him from dishonor. . . .

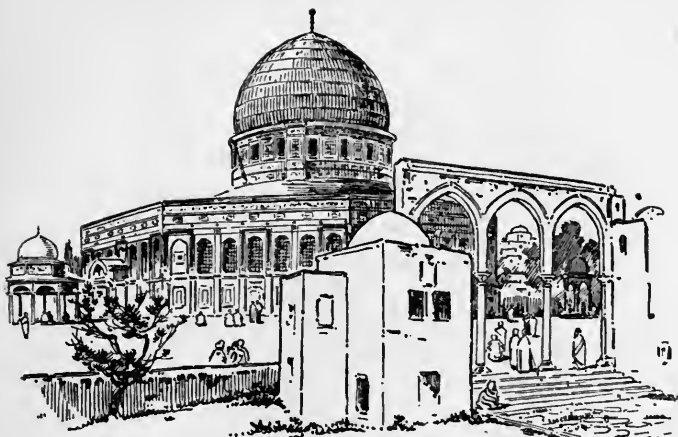
The Messiah Jesus is only the Son of Mary, the Ambassador of God, and His Word, which He deposited in Mary. . . .

God is not so constituted that He could have a Son; be that far from Him!"

The light stealing through the stained-glass windows, that are protected from the weather by thin



A PULPIT.



THE DOME OF THE ROCK.

sheets of porcelain, falls softly on the florid ornaments of bronze and gold, and casts a spell over the curious visitors who have entered to gaze upon the sacred rock.

The rock, which lies immediately beneath the dome, is partly covered by a Persian carpet; a high railing surrounds it. A gate in this railing admits you to the cavern in or under the rock, which is entered by a short flight of stairs.

Here, on this rock, according to the Talmud and the Targunis, Abraham was on the point of slaying Isaac; Melchisedek offered sacrifices; Jacob anointed it; Jehovah concealed

within it the Ark of the Covenant, which is supposed to be still buried beneath it. On this rock was written the "*Shamhamphorash*," the great and unspeakable Name of God; it was the threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, and King Solomon's Holy of Holies.

According to the Mohammedan tradition, the rock—which is fifty-seven feet long, fifty-three feet wide, and rises six feet and six inches above the floor of the mosque—hovers over an abyss, with a subterranean torrent raging below. Beneath it is a well, where the souls of the deceased assemble in prayer twice weekly. Some assert that the rock came from Paradise; that it rests upon a palm-tree watered by a river of Paradise, and that holy women stand beneath it in ecstasy. Again it is asserted that the last trump will be sounded from its summit, and the throne of God will then be placed there.

Mohammed declares that one prayer offered at the Dome of the Rock is better than a thousand uttered elsewhere. Hither he came to pray in a corner under the rock, and was forthwith translated to his heaven, on the back of his winged steed El Burak. His flight was so sudden and unexpected that he went through the roof of the cavern like a shot, leaving a large hole in verification of the fact. The enamored rock was upon the point of flying

after him, when it was seized by the Angel Gabriel, who left his finger-marks in the side of it. The rock, enraged at this interference on the part of the Angel, ran out its tongue at him, and there it hangs to this hour, in a very proper state of petrification.

The relics that are gathered in the mosque are trivial—a few hairs from Mohammed's beard, the banners of Mohammed and Omar, and the shield of Hamzeh; the petrified saddle of that flying horse, and a slab of jasper, wherein the Prophet drove nineteen golden nails. One nail had disappeared at the end of each epoch, and this was likely to continue; but one day the devil—probably in the disguise of a curio-hunting tourist—succeeded in making way with all but three of the nails, when, as usual, the Angel Gabriel came to the rescue, and three golden nails



are still treasured. Perhaps this is fortunate, for the Moslems believe that upon the disappearance of the last nail the world will come to an end.

There was a time when the Crusaders built a high altar in the centre of the rock, surrounding it with statues of the saints, and raising above a golden crucifix. Traces of the choir are still visible; and the bronze screen, with four gates, is still preserved, to mark that eventful period in the history of the rock; but the place that was once thrice holy has been profaned, and it is only through the courtesy of the Turks, and by the payment of an extortionate fee, that a Christian is permitted to visit it in his stocking-feet.

Thus passed the blessed days. Yussef Effendi, Mayor of Jerusalem, came again and again to lure us away among the streets of his native city. We smoked with him in *cafés* that sometimes hid themselves under the ponderous arches of a dismantled temple, whose stones were laid by the pious but warlike hands of the Crusaders. We treaded dingy bazaars, roofed with stone, begrimed with smoke, thronged with loungers of every nationality, and there priced the barbaric ornaments of beaten silver that delight the Oriental eye. Hoops and bracelets, knotted or braided; girdles strung thick with jingling corns; neck-

laces, breastplates, earrings, and bands for the forehead and the hair,—all these were put into the scales, and offered at so much per ounce.

One day, in that dusky bazaar—they are like veritable tunnels running under masses of concreted dwellings—an Arab lad strolled into our midst, and jostled us rudely, uttering at the same time some uncivil comments on our method of bargaining. In a moment our *kawwas*, who was vigilance itself, turned upon the young fellow, and drove him out of the bazaar with many stripes. No one seemed at all disconcerted—not even the poor lad upon whose back the blows fell thick and fast; he uttered not a word; the business of the hour was continued without interruption, and the affair dismissed without comment.

Meanwhile, the scales in the hands of the weigher balanced between clumsy disks of silver and the little bronze weights carefully selected by the very artisan who had melted and moulded and polished his wares in the small nook where he was offering them for sale. The shadowy populace drifted to and fro in the long, subterranean streets, whose sombre atmosphere was cleft here and there by dusty bars of dense blue light, that slid obliquely through crevices in the vaulted roof above.

Leaving the three dark streets of the bazaar—streets that are crossed by narrow ways and passages almost as black as a starless night—we came into the glare of open day. Then we went to and fro, between the forbidding walls of houses, that are in every case provided with bolts and bars and gratings. Often two or three steps, the breadth of the street, carried us up or down; there are no wheeled vehicles in the Holy City, and these street-steps are worn deep in the middle by the ceaseless feet of people and the hoofs of beasts, who share the way in common.

Side streets turn sharply to right or left, and almost immediately disappear beyond the corners of adjacent houses. We met swarms of Polish Jews, in flowing robes that looked not unlike morning-gowns; Greeks, Latins, Armenians, and Copts, are equally distinguished by their several costumes. Nubians, Hindoos, Afghans, Persians, Tartars, Arabs, and Modern Greeks filed before us in a perpetual pageant.

Christian Street in Jerusalem is an open bazaar, full of sunshine, mother of pearl, and amber. There are stone steps in this street that have been turned to account by venders of holy objects; these busy bees buzz over their wares on each side of the way, leaving between them a narrow path for the passage of pilgrims, their chief purchasers. Here are



spread heaps of crosses, cut in olive wood, ivory, amber and pearl; rosaries of every description line the walls a foot deep;—pious pictures, great pearl shells curiously engraved with scenes from the Passion of Our Lord, and some of them carved delicately in lace-like patterns; roses of Jericho, cut and dried, and looking for all the world like withered cabbage sprouts; olive-wood cuff-buttons, napkin-rings, paper-folders, and numberless pretty *souvenirs*. Glass bracelets from the Hebron are there, offered wholesale and retail, at prices ranging from two or three *sous* upward; necklaces, consisting of a multitude of thin glass disks, moulded in the fashion of flower-petals, and painted to resemble the wings of butterflies, are singularly beautiful, and astonishingly cheap.

There are shops where Bibles and Testaments may be had, bound in covers of olive wood, with the Cross of Jerusalem carved on one cover, and the name of the Holy City, in Hebrew characters, stamped upon the other. Candlesticks, boxes of all sizes and various patterns, crucifixes great and small, desks, tables, and even larger articles of furniture, are ready for immediate transportation; and all are made of olive wood, and most of the wood is said to have grown upon the Mount of Olives.

Nowhere else have I seen such splendid amber—great beads of it, almost as large as hens' eggs, strung on thick silken cords; mouth-pieces that you could hardly girdle with your thumb and finger—colossal globes of imprisoned sunshine, oily to the touch, perfumed, magnetic, and of inestimable value. These precious wares lie in confusion at the doors of shops no bigger than cupboards, and are brooded over by fat, drowsy-eyed Turks, who, for the most part, seem to think it an unkindness in the purchaser to bear away in triumph—though he leave its weight in gold—a tube of amber, out of which one might almost blow bubbles of liquid flame.



The number of shrines, convents, mosques, and synagogues in Jerusalem is almost beyond computation. One is dragged through scores of them, told fabulous legends, relieved of a *back-sheesh*—the always demanded fee—and suffered to depart at last in a state of pitiful exhaustion. Even objects of great historical interest, such as the "Hippicus Tower," called the "City of David," are

YUSSEF EFFENDI.

scarcely impressive in their present state; nor is the great, gray ruin of the Muristan at all satisfactory, unless one has the power to restore, in imagination, the broken arches, tear lichen from the crumbling walls, and replace the burnished arms that once hung there. Yet in the scholar's chamber of the Muristan, the order of the Hospitallers—the pious Knights of St. John of Jerusalem—nourished the pilgrims, who in those days were sorely in need of nourishment when they went up into the Holy City.

On the very spot where now the Hospice and great Church of St. Mary are falling to decay, once stood the monastery founded by Charlemagne.

The Church of St. Anne was built by the Crusaders on the site of a church mentioned as early as the 7th century. In the ancient crypt, says one tradition, dwelt St. Anne when she gave birth to the Blessed Virgin. Sultan Abdul-Mejid gave the Church of St. Anne to Napoleon III. in 1856. The Sultan likewise presented the Muristan to Prussia on the occasion of the visit of the Crown Prince to Constantinople, in 1869. It is not improbable that some favored monarch may find a polite note at the side of his breakfast-plate some fine morning, begging him to accept the Holy Sepulchre "as a slight testimonial," etc.

It is easy enough to find one's way to a spot where two or three cypresses stand upon the brink of a shallow pool of green-mantled water. It seems the receptacle for the rubbish of the neighborhood; one would hardly give it a second glance in passing. Yet that is the Bethesda—the pool into which the angel was wont to descend.

The Pool of Siloam, under the city wall, is visited by the afflicted, who consider it a never-failing fount of eye-water; but the current is polluted, and put to practical uses by tanners and washerwomen.

One might almost cry out in despair on the

first glance at Jerusalem, seeing the mercenary spirit of the inhabitants, which penetrates even the most secret and sacred of shrines: "Ye have made it a den of thieves!"

It was a relief to pause, as we often did, to glance through the grating of a Moslem cemetery. I remember one in particular—a tiny garden-



THE POOL OF SILOAM.

plot in the Via Dolorosa. It is overgrown with flowers and thistles, and fat, thriving weeds. Its serene and secret loveliness is a delight to the eye and the heart. A lamp swings under a gaunt olive-tree, that shelters half its unkept graves. The slender, turbaned headstones are slowly sinking in the rain-soaked soil. Some of them are prostrate in the long, juicy grasses, that bend over them as if to hide this proof of forgetfulness on the part of those who are, perhaps, still in the full enjoyment of life. That quiet nook is like a little poem on death—but it is lyrical, and not altogether sad; certainly, by no means so sad or so saddening as half, or more than half, that one sees on every hand in the streets of the Holy City.

Let us get hence under the deep wall of the Temple, and witness one of the most singular and solemn spectacles of the many that are peculiar to this singularly solemn city.

It is Friday at the Jews' wailing-place. Narrow, crooked, and filthy streets lead down under the hill of the temple. As you approach the open space against the huge blocks of stone that are imbedded in the foundations of the wall—stones that are believed to have rested there since the days of Solomon in all his glory—your ear is startled by a chorus of agonizing cries. Such a wail might have

ascended from the streets after that night of the death of the first-born.

Turning out of the slippery and ill-smelling passage into the place of wailing, I beheld a

multitude of men, women, and children, apparently stricken with a common sorrow, that could find adequate expression in nothing but tears and piercing cries. There may have been two hundred mourners; a very small company of strangers stood apart, and looked on in amazement. Old men with snowy beards, old women withered and weather-beaten, sat against the wall opposite the sacred stones of the Temple, reading their prayer-books, and nodding their heads quickly and violently backward



THE WAILING PLACE OF THE JEWS.

and forward, as if they would thus impress upon the very air the earnestness of their muttered prayers.

Young lads stood against the Temple wall, reading their litanies, and kissing the stones from time to time with affectionate reverence. The women were more demonstrative, and, as they threw their arms above their heads, they wrung their hands, and wept bitterly. Their cries and sobs were echoed by a chorus of mourners, while a hysterical wave of emotion passed through the entire assembly, that swayed to and fro like corn in the wind.

Some of the mourners knelt apart, and, with their foreheads pressed against the wall, worn smooth with countless kisses—their eyes all the while pouring rivers of tears—they appealed to those huge dumb blocks as passionately as if they meant that the very stones should hear them and reply.

Small wicks floating in oil were lighted from time to time by those who had just joined the wailers. An attendant kept a good supply of these tapers on hand, and whoso gave him a trifling fee was at once served with a feeble light; the light, however, was left burning in charge of the attendant.

A few of the mourners stood apart or knelt in silent meditation; a few gave way to grief so violent it seemed verging upon madness

and despair. All were evidently thoroughly in earnest, as they repeated over and over again this litany:

For the place that lies desolate,  
 For the place that is destroyed,  
 For the walls that are overthrown,  
 For our majesty that is departed,  
 For our great men who lie dead,  
 For the precious stones that are burned,  
 For the priests who have stumbled,  
 For the kings who have despised Him,

*We sit in solitude,  
 and mourn.*

On every lip I seemed to hear the name of Jerusalem said over and over a thousand times; it was this antiphon, chanted by each in turn, accompanied by a nervous swaying of the body, and with a total disregard of the surroundings:

We pray Thee have mercy on Zion!  
 Gather the children of Jerusalem.  
 Haste, haste, Redeemer of Zion!  
 Speak to the heart of Jerusalem.  
 May beauty and majesty surround Zion!  
 Ah! turn Thyself mercifully to Jerusalem.  
 May the Kingdom soon return to Zion!  
 Comfort those who mourn over Jerusalem.  
 May peace and joy abide with Zion,  
 And the branch (of Jesse) spring up at Jerusalem!

Until sunset these men and women cry out to the stones, beating their breasts, and weeping their tears, and some of them, no doubt,



believing that the Kingdom of David is at hand. There is not in all Jerusalem a scene more thrilling, though it is repeated weekly, and has been a custom from the far-distant day of the destruction of the glorious Temple, and may go on to the end of time; and nowhere have I been more deeply touched than in that narrow court, under the ancient wall of "the holy and beautiful house," with the sun sinking upon the despair of an outcast people, and the air burdened with their piteous lamentations.

## V.

### IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF OUR LORD.

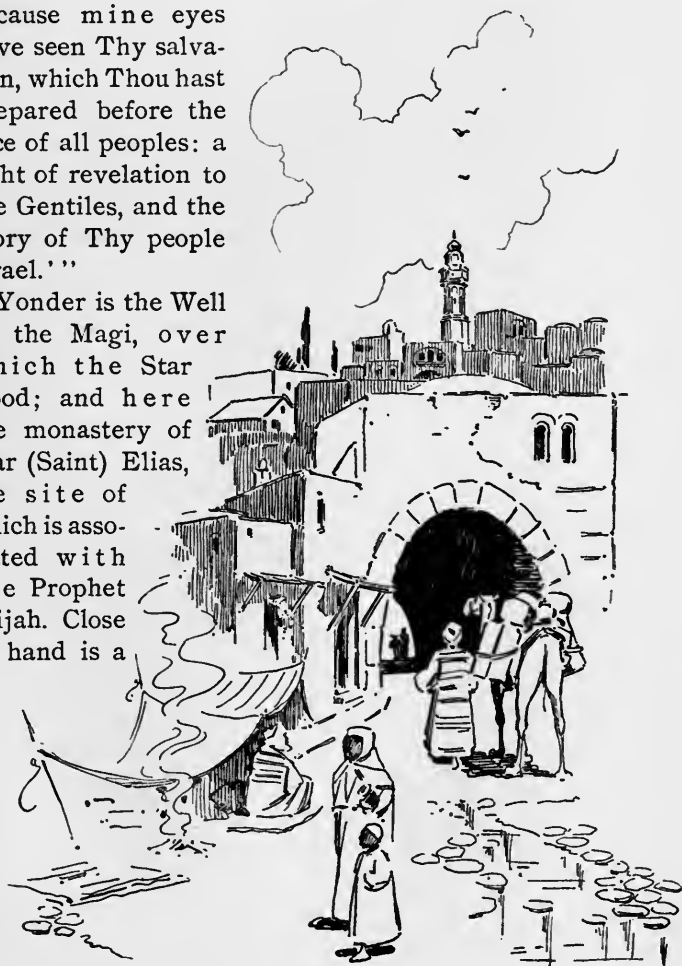
It is but an hour and twenty minutes' ride, due south, to Ephratah, which is Bethlehem; but it is a hard ride, over a stony road, in an uneasy saddle, on horseback. You quit the Jaffa Gate full of enthusiasm; the morning air is fresh and sweet; flowers bloom by the wayside; lizards slide over the stone walls that hem in great olive orchards on either hand.

Sober Syrians greet you with great dignity as they pass on their way to the Holy City. An Arab with a baboon in his arms halts in the road as you approach him, and pipes lustily upon a reed flute; the baboon tumbles over and over in the dust, uttering sharp, shrill cries, half in fear and half in fun. You toss one of the clumsy copper coins of the country, bearing the monogram of the Sultan, to this vagabond pair, and go your way rejoicing.

Monasteries dot the hill-tops, each one having its shrine, its legend, its special grace in the eyes of Latin, Armenian, or Greek. There is the house of Simeon, the just and devout man, unto whom it was revealed that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ; and when he saw the Child Jesus, he

"took Him into his arms, and blessed God and said: 'Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord! according to Thy word, in peace; because mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples: a light of revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.' "

Yonder is the Well of the Magi, over which the Star stood; and here the monastery of Mar (Saint) Elias, the site of which is associated with the Prophet Elijah. Close at hand is a



BETHLEHEM GATE.

well, where the Holy Family quenched their thirst; and here a field of peas. One day Our Lord, passing this very field, asked the husbandman what he was sowing; a parable might have followed, but the frivolous fellow replied, "Stones." And lo! when the peas came to be gathered, they were all as hard as bullets, and some of them lie in the field to this day.

At a fork in the road, where the path diverges to Hebron and the Pools of Siloam, stands a small domed building, that closely resembles a sheik's tomb. Here Christian,

Mohammedan, and Jew meet to pay common

reverence—if reverence it can be called which allows a shrine

to be

scored

with

insig-

nificant

names, and left

desolate on the

bleak hill-top. Three

thousand five hun-

dred years ago a car-

avan following this

highway was stayed in the midst of the journey, because Rachel,



THE TOMB OF RACHEL.

the younger and fairer wife of Jacob, was seized with birth-pangs. "So Rachel died, and was buried in the highway that leadeth to Ephratah, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob erected a pillar over her sepulchre: this is the pillar of Rachel's monument to this day." A pillar—a very little pillar—is within the crumbling shrine, and the devout rest there a moment on the way to Ephratah.

Let us go hence! Over a hill, stony and uninviting, where, from the brow of it, we see a valley tilled and terraced to the summit of its high, steep walls. There the olive and the vine flourish; corn waves in the wind; peaceful flocks are feeding upon the sunny slopes, while youthful shepherds pipe like young Pans upon rustic reeds fashioned by their own fingers.

Upon the edge of this valley hangs a village, with massive walls, and a few towers lifted up against the soft spring sky. The road we are following leads to a gateway, and is last among the narrow streets of the town. This is Bethlehem the Fruitful, whose people had of yore their cornfields, vineyards, flocks, and a famous cheese of their own making; Bethlehem, under whose walls Ruth lived and loved; the home of David and Joab; of Asahel and Abishai; the town that was fortified by Rehoboam, and restored by Justinian, and has again

and again fought and bled and died, as most of the towns on this side of the sea have done; and this it will probably continue to do at intervals so long as it is thought worth visiting by a fickle and fretful world.

Down in that happy valley, where now the shepherds soothe their flocks with music, those other shepherds were doing the very same thing, in the self-same costume, but turned wonderingly to listen to the chant of the jubilant stars, when the Blessed Babe lay in the manger at the farther end of the town.

Every man sees, or seems to see, a peculiar beauty in the women of Bethlehem—every man, save only myself. Barring the bluer eyes and the paler skin, what choice is there between women here and women all over Syria? Of course, your carpenter is a specialty in the village; he knows it full well, and poses just the least little bit in the world; not that he cares overmuch for St. Joseph, or the Blessed Virgin, or the Holy Babe in the Manger—these are old stories with him, and have long since become more or less commonplace—but because we all look at him with *such* eyes as we ride slowly through the unkept streets on our way to the Cradle in the rock, as much as to say, “Did he look like this when he sat at home in peace, awaiting the coming glory of her Child?”

In this wise you get into Bethlehem, between shops full of palmers' shells, and all the trinkets of travel; with shopmen plucking you by the skirts, and offering to undersell their fellows; and with one man, at least, who proposes to tattoo your arm in memory of Bethlehem or Jerusalem. Many are they who submit to the mild tortures of his ingenious needle, and bear away with them a crucifix, or some emblem of the time and place, pricked into their skin forever.

The great Church of St. Mary, within which is enshrined the Holy Manger, is divided into three sections, and distributed among the Latins, Armenians, and Turks. It stands at the farther end of the village; outwardly it is like a fortress; a little door admits you quite unwillingly. The place has been besieged too often to think of widening its threshold for the love of God. The Turks once moulded its leaden roof into bullets, with which they drove the Christians out of the town.

Within, all is tumult and tinsel—Vanity Fair housed within walls that are sacred, and should not be thus profaned. You grope down a flight of stairs into the crypt, and find it close, hot, and gaudily decorated in the worst possible taste; there are golden lamps galore, alabaster panels, silken and velvet hangings, and showers of spangles that twinkle dimly in



THE MANGER.



the perpetual twilight of the place. But all these do not make a manger that the heart will break over, or eyes grow dim with looking on.

Somewhere amid this splendid confusion the Crib that cradled the Divine Child, or at least a portion of that Crib, is hidden away; and when your eyes begin to get accustomed to the dusk of the grotto—for the crypt is a grotto in the rock—you search diligently and as reverently as you may from end to end, but are very likely unable to make anything of it; for all is veiled in a wealth of splendid trappings.

But, as you pass from corner to corner of the bewildering little nook, a great silver star is suddenly discovered,—a great silver star, sunk in the marble floor, under a low arch of marble. The soft rays of a score of sumptuous lamps fall upon it, and flood the niche with glorious light. You draw near to it, filled with awe and wonderment; you stoop to read the legend that is engraved about it; an irresistible impulse compels you to your knees, and you prostrate yourself in the radiance of those golden lamps that swing just above your head. In the intense, the exquisite, the unutterable peace that reigns in that hallowed nook, with startled eyes you trace the letters of the legend over and over again, before you begin to comprehend them; and even then it seems

more a delusion than reality, for the legend runs thus:

"HIC DE VIRGINE MARIA JESUS CHRISTUS NATUS EST."

How your heart leaps now with a strange joy! How your cheeks flush and grow pale by turns, and your throat contracts, as if you were seized in the relentless grasp of the Angel of Doubt, who fears you may forget yourself, and soften your heart at last!

After that you wander back into the town, slowly, silently, solemnly, caring to see nothing else, and to hear nothing, but wishing only to be left alone with your thoughts; for you were never before so near conviction. And, as you return to Jerusalem in the gloaming, with the dark hills gathering in about you, you say to yourself—at least I did—"Lord, I believe: help Thou mine unbelief!"

Going to Jericho! The animals at the gate of our convent in Jerusalem were not impatient on the morning of our departure for the Valley of the Jordan. These pilgrim-ridden beasts are *blasé*: they know all the holy shrines by heart, and seem to have lost faith in the identity of most of them. They have wasted their youth and their enthusiasm in the subterranean heat of the valley of Sodom and Gomorrah.

They know well enough that the way is long and dry, the sun scorching, the provender

scarce, and the climb out of the waste plains terrible; and for all this risk of life and limb they get no *backsheesh*; in fact, they expect nothing but blows from the hour they quit Jerusalem until they are again stalled within its gates, at the close of the third or fourth day.

Three empty saddles were reserved for our party,—three saddles that were threadbare and uncomfortable. Our *karwas*, splendidly capar-



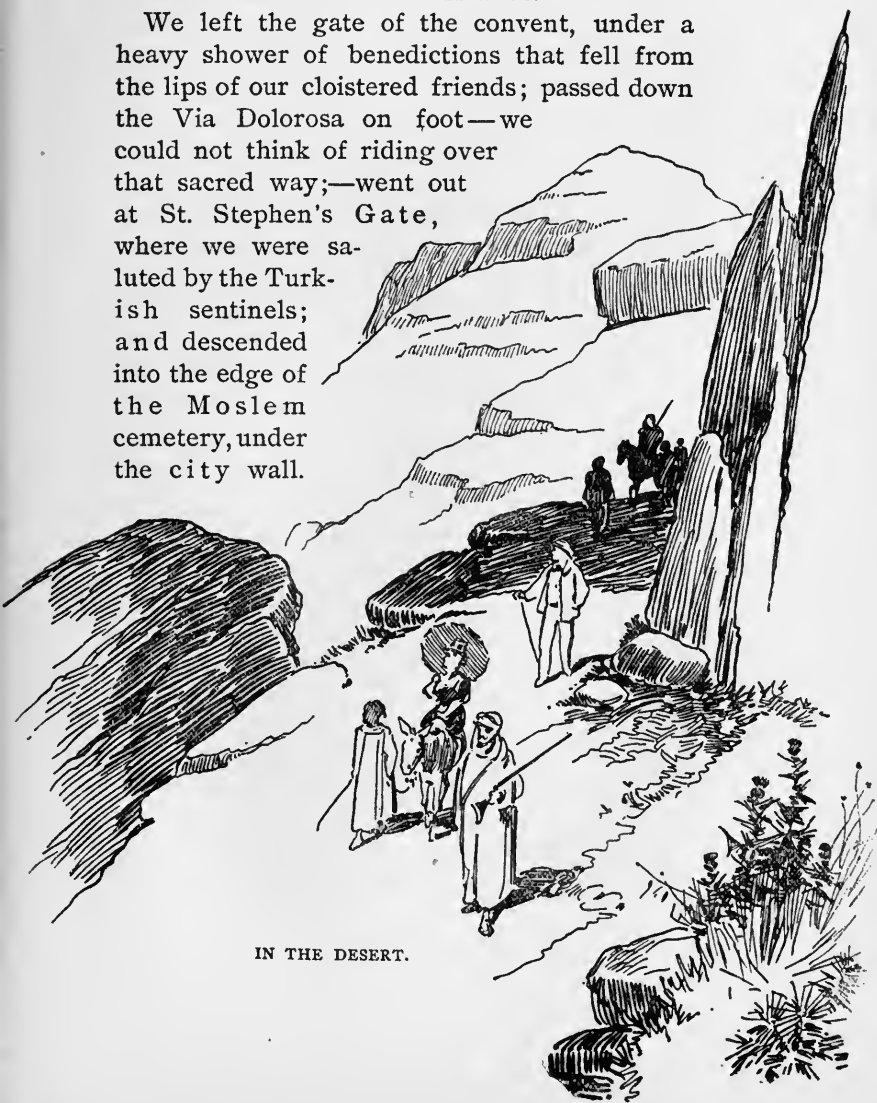
isoned, stood bravely by, awaiting our pleasure, at a good hour in the morning. A mule laden with a pyramid of luggage and camp furniture—tents, kettles, bedding, provisions, and the like—had already gone on in advance, under the guidance of a stout Arab boy, who was expected to make most of the journey on foot.

A Bedouin chief—one of those handsomely upholstered fellows that are commonly known as the "Children of the Desert"—sat in his huge saddle, and looked the living image of a wax-work. This gorgeous creature had been engaged at a pretty good figure, expressly to protect us from the charges of wild tribes—the dwellers in the black tents—and was himself one of them. His liberal bribe was to be shared with his swarthy fellows, a species of blackmail which the Turkish Government allows, and even encourages.

Without our sheik to ride before us, waving his long spear in the air, and casting from time to time a searching glance over the desert hills, or into the wild ravines of the wilderness, we must surely have fallen by the wayside, and been stripped not only of our superfluous valuables, but of every vestige of clothing. This fate befell a party of three that had gone down into the wilderness scarcely a fortnight before our journey, owing to the treachery of the

sheik, who piloted them only to betray them into the hands of his lawless tribe.

We left the gate of the convent, under a heavy shower of benedictions that fell from the lips of our cloistered friends; passed down the Via Dolorosa on foot—we could not think of riding over that sacred way;—went out at St. Stephen's Gate, where we were saluted by the Turkish sentinels; and descended into the edge of the Moslem cemetery, under the city wall.



IN THE DESERT.

Here we mounted, and dropped slowly down the rather steep road into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, reaching the bed of it in five minutes.

Turning to the right, at the Garden of Gethsemane, we followed the ancient road, over the shoulder of Olivet, above the Pool of Siloam. In twenty minutes we sighted a small, mud-colored village. A few trees grow about it; a few children, in rags and tatters, ran out to meet us; a few dogs, stretched in the sun and the dust, lifted their lazy heads and barked faintly, more in sorrow than in anger, and dropped their heads again, to be covered immediately by swarms of fat, blue-black flies. Here we drew rein for a time, inasmuch as one of our beasts had already developed symptoms of premature decay—and this was the village of Bethany.

Down the road over which we had come, at a moderate pace, we were shown the spot where Judas hanged himself; likewise the site of the withered fig-tree which was cursed by Our Lord. These were regarded in silence, for we were in no mood to question the authenticity of any shrine whatever. Back went the unworthy beast, in charge of our *kawwas*, while we sat down in the edge of Bethany to await the arrival of a substitute.

Bethany, "the house of poverty," charms one with its undisguised nakedness. It is

almost as primitive and bare as an Arab village. It was the haunt of lepers in the days when those wretched outcasts went to and fro among the valleys round about Jerusalem, crying, "Unclean! Unclean!"

The house of Simon the Leper was here; you can see a hovel bearing that name to-day, on payment of half a franc. The home of Martha and Mary, and the tomb of Lazarus, are still pointed out with the one hand, while the other is extended in a gesture of silent supplication that is simply irresistible. It was here also—let us think as lightly as we may of the possibility of identifying the exact spot—it was here that the "alabaster box of ointment," "of spikenard, of great value," was broken, and poured upon the head of our divine Lord; and here He spoke those most precious of all words: "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

So passed the time until the arrival of a fresh horse; a change of saddles all around—for it was discovered that no one was quite satisfied at the start—and a highly successful trial heat of two or three hundred yards drove all thoughts of Bethany and its associations from our minds.

Then we hastened into a valley, where the highway is exposed to the assaults of thieves

and robbers; it has for ages been the haunt of outlaws, and many a pilgrim has been left by the wayside stripped and bleeding, with never so much as a good Samaritan to lend him a helping hand. Here indeed are traces of an ancient khan, the one secure halting place between Jericho and Jerusalem when this road was the chief thoroughfare of the people. Not far distant is located the scene of Our Lord's parable; the good Samaritan must have lodged in this very khan.

The way is dreary and desolate; dust, sun-burnt soil, a treeless range of hills despoiled of every vestige of life by swarms of insects, continually disenchant the eye. The few trees that are found in the Wady-es-Sidr, known as the *Zizyphus spina Christi*, bear the hideous thorns with which Our Lord was crowned.

Farther on, deep in the hot ravines, is the wilderness where Elijah was fed by the ravens; where Our Lord fasted, and was tempted by the devil; and where hosts of hermits afterward sought shelter and seclusion in the innumerable caves and grottoes that honeycomb those barren hills.

So late as 1874 some travelers, climbing among the caverns in the steep face of Jebel Karantel, found two Abyssinian hermits, who are said to live permanently in their eyries,



feeding only upon herbs, and poring over their Ethiopian breviaries. There is an ancient chapel up yonder, hewn out of the solid rock; and some of the hermitages are still adorned with rude, half-obliterated frescoes. All these retreats are most difficult of access, and only the clearest-headed and stoutest climbers are able to reach them, with the aid of ladders, ropes, and guides.

From the summit of Pisgah, over against Jericho, one obtains the famous view that struck awe to the breast of Balaam, and joy to the heart of the great leader of the children of Israel; for "the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphtali; and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh; and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar."

Imagine the speechless delight of the pilgrim who is to-day privileged to

Climb where Moses stood,  
And view the landscape o'er!

Thus we cantered down the Jericho road, hour after hour—each hour hotter and drier and dustier than the last. Our *kawwas*, having come out of the Holy City, seemed to forget for the time his impressive dignity, and fell to singing Bedawee love-songs at the top of his voice. They must have been as broad as they

were long, for the sheik and our youthful polyglot—a graduate of the Oriental Academy of Vienna, who spoke, read and wrote no less than nine languages—having knowledge of their meaning, shrieked with laughter, and refused even a modified version when we begged a reason for their mirthful blushes.

A large, straggling caravan of poor Russian pilgrims lined the road; they were going down to bathe in the Jordan. Some rode diminutive donkeys; one or two had horses, and a servant to bear the burden of the pilgrimage in the shape of dry provender; but the majority of them, men and women, were on foot.

These Russians fell upon us tooth and nail, and would have devoured us in our camp, as we were resting half-way on the journey, had they not been driven out by the sheik and our *kawwas*, who flourished vigorously their lances and glittering sabres. Nor was this our only diversion: my unlucky beast fell twice or thrice in the dirt; but I grew used to those impromptu collapses; they finally became no more of a surprise to me than an "aside" in a melodrama.

My last descent was singularly brilliant. Trotting on in advance of the Russians, whom we were sure to pass on the road, though they overtook us at every halt we made, my horse suddenly dropped under me with his nose in

the dust; he struggled to recover himself, and I to retain my seat, as is usual under such circumstances; but the effort was of uncommon violence, and he burst his girth; my saddle flew into fragments; I passed on over a couple of sharp ears, covered with dust and confusion, and left the ruins in the road to be restored by our guardian attendants, who were skylarking in the rear of the train.

The rest of that journey I made in a shattered saddle, bound to the beast by a series of strong cords that were clumsily knotted under my left leg; but these episodes are of too frequent occurrence in Oriental travel to excite comment on the spot.

It was late in the afternoon when we descended the last steep decline on the border of the plains of Jericho. The heat was intense; we had come down out of the chilly nights of Jerusalem into a tropical valley, that once boasted palm gardens and palaces the most beautiful in the land. Now it is bare almost to nakedness.

A long, winding grove of willows marks the course of a swift river in the distance,—it is the Jordan that flows yonder under those verdant boughs. To the right, at the lower end of the valley, is a sheet of water so exquisitely blue that it often seems as if the eye were piercing a deep purple gorge, and

plunging into the fathomless depths of a cloudless summer sky; a mirage is not more lovely or more deceptive, for that mirror of paradise is the Dead Salt Sea. But in the foreground, the parched plains to the right of us and the left of us, and in the rear—almost as far as the eye can see, the land is the abomination of desolation.

With pardonable impatience we endeavor to hasten over the stony plains, among stunted shrubs, through water-courses that have been dry for ages, under the dismantled arches of an antique aqueduct, and from one low ridge to another, hoping always to reach in the next brief charge of our jaded beasts the enticing groves of Jericho; but those green pastures are still miles away. We are deceived by the dry atmosphere, that seems to bring the distance almost within our reach, and our patience is quite spent long before we throw the bridles upon the drooping necks of our horses, when they at once slide down to the ears that sway contentedly over an actual mouthful of juicy grass.

While we have been lingering and exploring by the wayside much of the day, our muleteer has pressed forward, and already the white cones of our camp tents appear among the delicious verdure of the trees. All about us there are luxuriant figs, with large, fan-like

leaves; tangles of wild grape-vine; the fragrant and blooming *Acacia Farnesiana*, the "Balm of Gilead," and the gum-arabic plant. It is like a hot-house, that grove of Jericho; and no wonder, for we are nine hundred feet below the tumbling



HABITATION IN JERICO.

waves of the Mediterranean, and not a breath of air is stirring down in that hollow of the earth.

The faithful muleteer, whose journey seemed only to have increased his amiability, kindled a brisk fire under the trees, and swung a kettle of beaf-tea in the fork of a sapling that overhung the coals; two or three Bedouins stole into camp with eggs, fruit, and milk; and supper was soon under way.

As night was drawing near, we went out into the squalid village, piloted by the sheik, who was a chief of that tribe of villagers; and the *karwas*, who was, out of Jerusalem, merely a heavy Syrian swell. Snarling dogs received us with a chorus as we struck through a hedge of thorns and cacti; then half the town sent up a shout of welcome, mingled with reproofs addressed to the clamorous curs that by this time had surrounded us. The dogs were finally beaten off by our attendants; a few fine-looking, half-naked fellows advanced to meet us, and we entered modern Jericho in solemn state.

There are about sixty families, small in stature, slender, under-fed, miserably clad, with dark, sun-burnt skins, and blue lips covered with tattooed tracery, dwelling in the mud huts of the village. The old men go up into the wilderness round about, and lie in wait

for pilgrims; the young men lead the flocks over the smoking plains, setting forth at day-break, and returning to the fold at dusk. The women bring water from Elisha's Spring, near which stood the house of Rahab—she who sheltered the spies of Joshua. They walk to and fro in the village streets, these weird women, clad in tattered and soiled robes, but with the pride of sultanas, every one of them; the children lie with the lazy dogs, and share the vermin.

Even the bewitching twilight cannot embellish the wretchedness of Jéricho; it is more primitive than the poorest Egyptian village that has yet come under my eye. The wasps build better; ground-squirrels and prairie-dogs are much cozier in their little cellars.

The only bit of architecture left to modern Jericho is a solitary square tower, which marks the site of Gilgal—if we may abide by the supposition of a half-dozen experienced guessers. It stands on a slight elevation, somewhat apart from the village, and looks very lonesome indeed, as the twilight settles deep down into this wonderful valley.

Half the town followed us back to camp. We sought shelter within our tents, where there were Persian rugs underfoot, striped draperies overhead, curtains festooned about us, and more furniture than we had any use

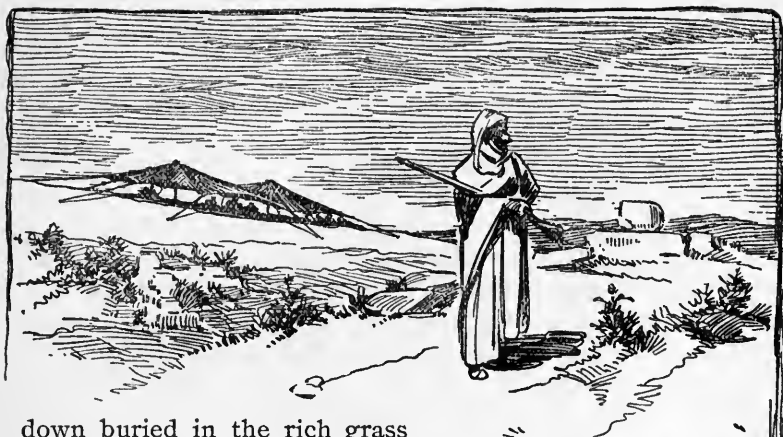
for. This is the way one travels in Syria: with a portable hotel at his heels, and a magical larder mysteriously making its appearance at meal hours.

Jericho boasts but one remembrancer of her voluptuous past—her maids, lithe, blue-lipped, shrill-voiced, and tireless, who dance under the starlight before the camp so long as the pilgrim suffers them in patience. A few pieces of silver, a flask of wine, and they renew their snake-like posturing, and pitch their fierce cries a note higher.

Two of these *Ghawazy* beguiled us for an hour. Our nargilehs were kindled, and placed upon mats before us; the pliant stem, a fathom long, was gracefully uncoiled and pressed to our expectant lips; then we drew deep sighs of satisfaction from the bowl, where the rose water bubbled audibly, and took on a tinge of amber as the smoke passed through it, losing both heat and oil in the process. Of course we no longer thought of journeying without our pipes, our pouches, and our pastils for keeping the bowl alight, wherewith to complete the earthly happiness which has been grossly misrepresented by the cynics.

The camp was thronged with Bedouins, a thievish lot, whose reputation is evil. We sat against our tents, in the starlight and the firelight, on carpets that were like beds of





down buried in the rich grass that grew within the grove.

On either hand squatted the sheik and the *kawwas*, ever with an eye single to our comfort. A train of shepherd lads, clad in tunics of coarse camel's hair, skipped and clapped their hands wildly, keeping time to a barbaric and monotonous chant. Two dancers, whose dark-blue robes flowed about them, falling from the shoulders to the feet with classic grace, raised their bare arms above their heads, and swung their bodies to and fro with great spirit and astonishing freedom. They seized the sabres of our guards, and whirled the flashing blades in the firelight, cutting the air savagely and seeming to slaugh-



BEDOUIV ENCAMPMENT.

ter hosts of imaginary innocents, with a fiendish joy that was positively blood-curdling.

At intervals these furies threw back their heads, and uttered a long, piercing cry, that pricked the ear like a poniard. They rushed toward us, and, crouching down at our side, stabbed us through the brain with this two-edged shriek. They caught it in their throats, and strove to hold it back; but it struggled, and shook, and forced its way out, thinner and sharper and more exquisitely painful than before. I heard the scream of the sabredancers of Jericho long after I had slept. I think it summoned me suddenly out of my dream, for I saw the firelight smoldering near the flap of my tent, and the guards crouching over the embers, while the dew was falling, and the night grew damp and chill.

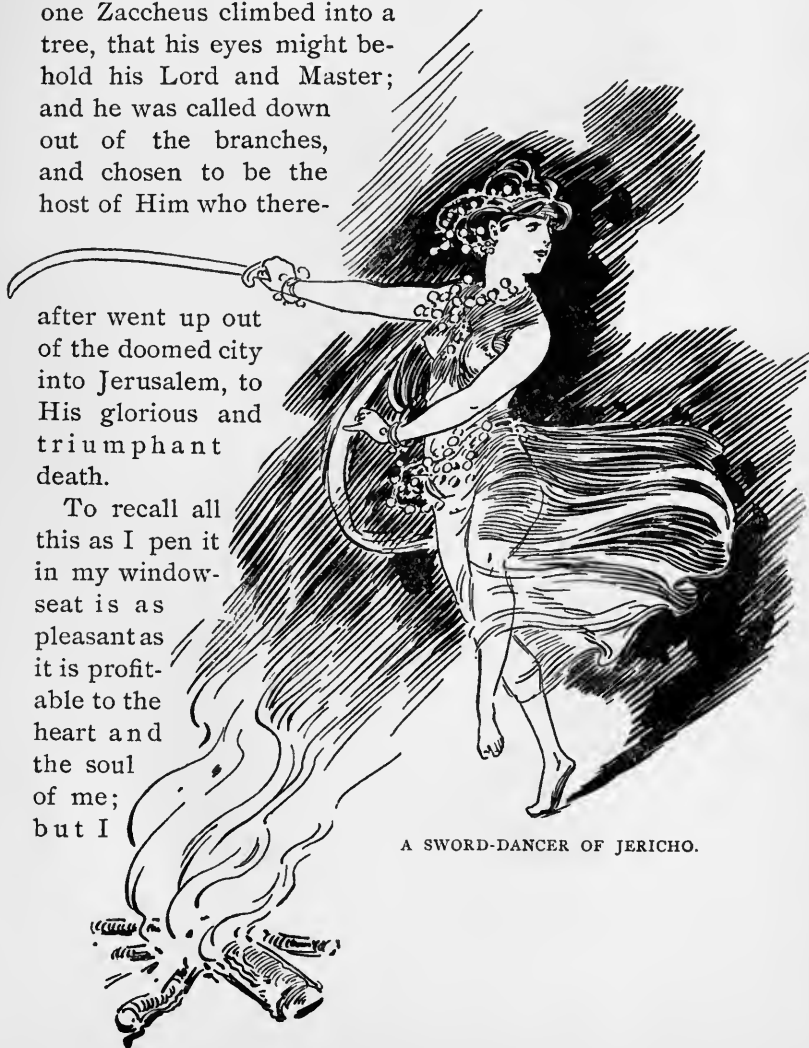
Above us the brilliant stars gloated over the accursed valley that is laid waste forever. It is written of him that shall seek to rebuild the city: "He shall lay the foundations thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it."

In the cool of the dawn I fancied that the odors of the balsamic gardens visited us, and I heard leafy whisperings among the boughs of the citron and the date and the pomegranate trees. I seemed to see the blossoming avenues that once skirted the royal city—the city

which Antony gave to Cleopatra, and which she sold for pin money. Herod bought it, and died in it. And just in the edge of the town one Zaccheus climbed into a tree, that his eyes might behold his Lord and Master; and he was called down out of the branches, and chosen to be the host of Him who there-

after went up out of the doomed city into Jerusalem, to His glorious and triumphant death.

To recall all this as I pen it in my window-seat is as pleasant as it is profitable to the heart and the soul of me; but I



A SWORD-DANCER OF JERICHO.



THE JORDAN.

remember that on the night in question I was uncommonly restless, and in perpetual fear of an inundation of creeping and crawling things. Therefore, O friend! think thrice before you wish your enemy in Jericho!

While it was still dark I arose, and stretched myself under the noiseless boughs, heavy with dripping dew; the flashing stars seemed to discharge arrows of light, that slid through the violet-tinted air, and dissolved away in space.

Our camp-fire was out; the guards slept audibly, rolled in their ample cloaks of camel's hair striped with brown and buff. The animals alone seemed impatient; not that they were eager to resume a journey, which was no doubt, in their estimation, an altogether unnecessary and inexcusable weariness of the

flesh, but because the rheumatic chill which was in the air was slowly penetrating the very marrow of their bones.

I felt that dawn was fully due, and, yawning to some purpose, the camp awoke; the guards stirred the dead embers, and blew up a cheerful flame; our mats were spread beside it; the nargileh was primed, and crowned with a living coal; the coffee-pot swung over the blaze, and the muleteer was dispatched into the still slumbering village, nest-hunting, and with a prayer and a *backsheesh* for a flagon of goat's milk.

Long before the day was fairly ushered in, while the East was still faint and pale, and the stars as brilliant as ever, we struck camp, and set out for the banks of the Jordan. It is a little over an hour's ride from Jericho, but we dreaded the heat of the day, and knew that many a scorching mile lay between us and sunset.

All Jericho was up betimes, and the whole town cried out with one voice: "*Backsheesh! backsheesh! yah Hadji!*" As we were called *Hawadji*, or merchant, in Egypt—for there one travels to purchase goods or dispose of them, and is therefore a merchant—so here we were hailed as *Hadji*, or pilgrim. In the Holy Land all are pilgrims; the distinction is reasonable, and rather flattering to the ear of the devout

traveler, until he becomes accustomed to it, and is finally driven mad with the persistency of the beggar-tribes.

The trail from Jericho to the ford of the Jordan winds through groves of tamarisk, laurustinus, mimosa, and willow. There is often a broad belt of jungle, through which it is difficult to pass without being seized by the sharp and enormous thorns of the *spina Christi*; but we could sometimes dash forward through the interstices; and it was exhilarating in the extreme—the brisk gallop in the cool dawn on our way to the sacred stream.

I fear we were, one and all, a little impatient at our lack of adventure; thus far, into the bowels of a land overrun by a wild and treacherous race, we had cantered on hour after hour, with no more serious interruption than the frequent stumbling of our beasts, and the destruction of my saddle. Other travelers have been stripped and beaten; nearly every writer within my knowledge seems to have drawn a bead on the first bush that shook a berry at him, and to have enjoyed to the full the exquisite agony of suspense. I confess, to my utter humiliation at the thought, that from the hour we left Jerusalem until we returned again within her gates, we plodded through the worst districts of the enemy's country without even a hint of danger. The lions of

Jeremiah have departed; the crocodile is extinct; there is nothing more to be dreaded at this late day than the mosquito, and he is a bore.

In every fresh grove we entered we hoped to come suddenly upon the Jordan; we listened for the ripple of waters, and heard nothing but the hollow echo of thick-falling hoofs as they struck the clay-crust of the plains. At last our *kawwas* gave us a little thrill of emotion by crying out that we were nearing the river. I wondered what it was like—its breadth, its color. It then seemed to me that I had never read anywhere a passage descriptive of the stream. Of course I had, and had forgotten it, as one forgets ninety-nine hundredths of one's general reading; but I could not at the moment picture the stream that we were so soon to see.

The trees grew larger and stood apart, stretching out wide branches, that were full of glittering gold as we rode under them; for the sun was just rising over the mountains of Moab, and the hour was glorious beyond compare.

The grove was like a bit of park land, trimmed, and swept clean; a spot to camp in and luxuriate in, and to love nature in with a hearty and loyal love. A hedge of willows bordered this grove on the farther side;

through it we caught a glimpse of rushing and sparkling waters; we heard the joyous waves as they danced onward under the canopy of foliage, and the sound can only be compared to the very sparkle of the stream. Yes! you can actually *hear* the waters sparkle; the glee, the freshness, the freedom, and the jubilant life of that tumbling torrent I have never seen equaled elsewhere. This was the swift Jordan, hurrying down to smother itself in the gummy depths of the Dead Sea.

We were upon the sloping shore at the most famous ford of the river; it was about thirty yards to the opposite bank. Willows grow close to the water's edge, and shut out the view at the first turn a few rods below the ford. Some of the pendulous boughs trail in the water, and are caught again and again by the tossing waves, and dragged along in the impetuous current; but they spring back a moment later, and dash the water from their leaves in showers of spray, as they once more begin coquetting with the tide.

The Jordan is about the color of a new slate—a slate with the grayish-green cloud still covering its surface. Its waters are opaque, thickened with clay, but delicious in temperature, and very refreshing to a pilgrim's palate.

Is it any wonder that the river rushes like a mill-race? From its source to its mouth, one



hundred and thirty miles in a bee-line, it descends three thousand feet. Its very name, *Yarden*, in Hebrew signifies descent. It twists and turns until it has trebled the natural distance from fountain to sea. It rises in its might, and covers the broad plains, while the flocks and herds that love to feed beside it flee affrighted unto the hills.

You cannot bridge it; often you can not ford it; thrice were the waters miraculously parted in the old miraculous days, that the prophet might pass over it dryshod. Not far from the spot we stood upon, St. Christopher stemmed the tide, with the Christ-Child in his arms; and at this very point the Savior of men was baptized by St. John the Baptist, after the fast of forty days up in the wilderness yonder. O River, of all rivers most blessed! out of a cloud came the mystical white Dove, and hovered above thy shores.

If the waters of the Jordan were magical they could hardly exercise a more potent spell; instinctively we drew apart among the willows, disrobed with no little solemnity, and, with the fresh air of the morning breathing sweetly upon us, we passed into the cleansing flood. There was life in every drop of that water—new life, full of strength and health and hope; it was a bath of the soul!

While we were wading cautiously near the

shore, and sometimes sitting down on the clay bottom, to get as much of the water with as little of the current as possible, we were startled by a crashing of underbrush, and the thunder of many feet. I thought of Warburton, Kinglake, Dixon, and all those lucky fellows who were continually having hair-breadth escapes when they were in the Holy Land—and I was glad! Who would not willingly perish in the Jordan, if perish he must? Our frightened animals were upon the point of stampeding, and we arose in the midst of the waves to receive the lost tribe that had thus unexpectedly come in from the wilderness. In a moment our enthusiasm was blighted; out of the bush emerged the Russian pilgrims in hot haste, and made for the shore where we were bathing.

Each strove to be the first to plunge into the stream; many of them were already half-undressed, and they all speedily stripped, put on a long white garment—a kind of shroud, which they are to preserve for their burial robe—and, having immersed themselves with more or less decorum, they took it off, folded it carefully, and put it away in their little bundles of luggage. We were actually driven from the place by those enthusiasts. A great trial to our polyglot.

Then we wandered up-stream, under airy

vine-arbors and tangles of bristling thorn, through deep beds of fern, and fragrant, flowering creepers. There was a rich growth of timber, and, reaching an exceedingly wild and picturesque nook in a bend of the river, we took our morning meal. Great cliffs, steep and rugged, towered above us; the stream came gushing out of a gorge, rejoicing that its course was well-nigh run; at any rate, it was rejoicing with exceeding great joy, and never heart-fed artery of the human frame throbbed with more palpable life.

Refreshed, stayed with apples which were not of Sodom, comforted with flagons spicy and cool, we once more mounted our long-suffering steeds, and set out on an hour's gallop to the Dead Sea.

We passed the Russians, who gave us no very civil greeting; they had donned their earthly garments, and were returning over the old road to Jerusalem. The Dead Sea was nothing to them; each bore in his meagre bundle his death-shroud, damp with Jordan waters; and this was a consolation for them all. They had finished the round of their experiences, they had fought the good fight according to the best of their ability—it was a hard fight in some cases—and now they were ready to begin their homeward journey by land and sea; a journey long and perilous, and one



THE DEAD SEA

that is seldom taken without almost overwhelming impediments—fever, famine, grievous fatigue; unsheltered from the tempestuous elements in the extremes of heat and cold; making their bed with poverty and vermin, and with death plucking them from the ranks on the highways, or in the midst of the desert wastes. Surely the fervor and the fortitude of these miserable devotees should secure for them the reward they so much covet—Christian burial, and heavenly rest.

We reveled in a rapid jaunt over the parched plains, with the fresh air of the morning saluting our nostrils. Much of the way we followed the Jordan bank, and were somewhat shielded by the foliage that fringes it. All this time, though we could have leaped into the stream with a hop, skip, and jump, we caught only occasional glimpses of the rushing waters as they dashed gaily above the steep

clay banks, or flashed for a moment in the green arches of the willow copse.

The current was often broken by tiny islets crowded with bushes, and the frequent rapids and abrupt turns in the stream amazed me. I am still puzzled to know how an American expedition, some years ago, succeeded in bringing two metal boats down the river from Tiberias to the Dead Sea. Of course, the intrepid MacGregor, with his little "Rob Roy" canoe, skated over the ripples like a water bug, and came out in book form, with flying colors; but the astonishing vitality of the Jordan waters, the jubilant dance of those sparkling cascades, are enough to startle any one but the most ardent and reckless of aquatic sportsmen.

Until we are actually upon the shore of the Dead Sea, ploughing through pebbles and soft sand, we strained our eyes in vain toward the valley of death, eager to catch a glimpse of its bitter flood. Our trail wound through a dense growth of cane, oleander, cactus, and tamarisk; we trotted over the baked soil, Indian file, thinking of the wild boars, wolves, jackals, and leopards that prowl in the vale of Gilgal—the vale that of old was compared to the "Garden of the Lord."

We saw nothing, not even a vulture; though no panorama of the Dead Sea is complete without the shadow of his wings darkening the

canvas; and probably an angry cloud, of midnight blackness, out of which tongues of fire dart upon the "submerged cities of sin," will be found brooding over the sombre tableau. Such I used to imagine it, but in its stead I now recall this picture: Two lofty mountain walls; rugged, outlining grotesque, gigantic forms, and stretching far away into the limitless distance, where they dissolve in a luminous haze; a sea of living sapphire, more lovely than any sea, save that which bathes the enchanted Vesuvian coast; a shelving beach, sparkling with pebbles, silvered with salt crystals, and cushioned with dazzling sand, that seems to creep and scintillate in the intense heat of the noonday sun.

A few gaunt and stunted shrubs stand near the forsaken shore; a few broken boughs, white and shining like gnawed bones, bestrew the beach. Not a living thing visible above or about us; not a living or breathing thing within the pellucid chambers of that fatal sea. Oily ripples slide noiselessly over the sands, and sink back again into the depths, as if dragged thither by the contraction of the elastic and unbroken surface of the sea.

Shore, sea, and sky are melted into a chimera of unearthly beauty; the sky is not more profoundly blue than the watery abyss that separates those rosy hills to the east and

west. There is no palpable surface there, no visible division of the elements; let it be air or water—it might be either—the single impression it conveys to the mind is one of pure color. Only such radiant hills as those that girdle it are worthy of it; they also are marvels of color: pink and pale in the twilight, scarlet in the rising and setting of the sun; they never become commonplace, but change their tints as a live coal changes when the reviving air blows softly upon it.

Out of the splendid distance, over the Salt Sea, the Sea of Asphalt, the Lake of Lot—call it by what name you will, it bears all these—over the Eastern Sea of the old prophets, stole the withering breath of a furnace. Our poor beasts sweltered and swayed dizzily; there was no possible shelter near the shore, for our camp trappings had already gone up into the wilderness. A dip in the glutinous water was all we asked now, and in ten minutes we stood upon the sand, that burnt like a bed of cinders, and were half blinded by the glare that nearly overcame us before we were well out of it.

The sea near the plains of the Jordan is shallow. Looking toward the south, the eye is lost in the profound mist that envelops the farther shore. Here are six and forty miles of sky-blue crystal in one solid mass, thirteen

hundred feet in depth, and the burnished surface of which is thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean.

This sea is a mystery and a miracle; but Sodom and Gomorrah are not buried under these waves, as many a good man fondly fancies. One must look elsewhere for the sites of those sinful cities—perhaps among the sulphur fields; the pillars of salt, that are very numerous in that part of the country; and the asphaltum beds, that generate a heat almost sufficient to consume a fireproof city.

Neither fish, shell, nor coral are found here; sea-fish perish in these waters, because they have been reared on something less than four per cent of salt to ninety-six of water; and here a fourth part of the whole consists of a solution of various salts—chlorides of magnesium, calcium, sodium, potassium, bromide of potassium, and sulphate of iron.

There are fish-bones on the shore, the jetsam of the Jordan; the bitter oil—it is hardly worthy of the name of water—that strangles every living thing to death, and then spews it out to bleach in the sun—the oily sea invites you to its embrace with a siren charm; but you curse her after the first joy is over, for she daubs you with salt and grease.

Six million tons of sweet water fall into the Dead Sea daily; six million rise out of it,



spiritualized, and float over it in nebulous islands of light. On the bosom of the phantom sea sleep shadow-islands, the reflections of these clouds; again and again you ask yourself, are they real, the clouds and the shadows in the sky and sea, or is it all a beautiful illusion?

When we waded into the water, we felt the weight of it before we had got knee-deep; soon we grew buoyant, and kept our balance with some difficulty; a few steps farther, and over we went, heels up, and, to our surprise, heads up likewise. The bath was certainly most refreshing, and the novelty of it not unlike a good-natured, practical joke. The Dead Sea does well enough for a change of medicine—it is as bitter as gall—but I would as soon think of trying to swim in a strong solution of feather-beds.

The sun soon drove us to the shore, where we discovered that we were without a drop of fresh water; we had forgotten to replenish our store while we might have obtained it in abundance at the passage of the Jordan; and when we had clothed ourselves, and struck out for the wilderness, our skins burned like fire, and we shed flakes of salt, in such profusion that you might easily have mistaken us for lineal descendants of Lot.

We crept out of the Valley of the Jordan, swathed to the eyes in cloaks of coarse camel's

hair. You would have thought us smothering in the voluminous folds of this Bedouin garment; but the truth is, we were comparatively comfortable; for the sun cannot penetrate the thick web of homely homespun, and your Bedouin scout will brave the fierce furnace-heat of the desert under the shelter and the shadow of this one clumsy robe.

We were not long in the bed of the valley before we started the partridge, the wild pigeon, and the hare from cover; and had a shot or two, that, however, brought us nothing more substantial than a sharp echo, shattered to fragments in the gorges of the mountains close at hand.

If a curse hangs over the plains of Jericho, withering the rose thereof, and stuffing the plump apples of Sodom with dry dust, it is nothing in comparison with the eternal blight that sears the Judean wilderness as with fire. Never so much as a blade of



grass pricks through the parched and gaping crust, that crumbles under the hoof like plaster. Mountains of chalk, sand, gypsum, chert, and tufa, gashed and scarred, and cut down to the quick by fierce winter torrents; tumbled hither and thither by unrecorded but terrible convulsions of nature; deserted by every lovely form of life; the haunt of the fox, the vulture, the hyena, the leopard, and the wolf; with the snake coiling in the sun, and hissing in the shadow of the caves that everywhere perforate the abrupt walls of the gorges—this is the wilderness of St. John the Baptist!

Here he fed on locusts and wild honey, and dwelt apart among the caves, clad in a shirt of camel's hair—even the garment that is worn to-day by the children of the children of the children of Esau, the Bedouin.

All through the desolate land of Judea the wandering tribes of the desert pitch their black tents. They nourish their scanty flocks upon such edible litter as falls in the track of the caravans; stealing noiselessly in and out among the stifling ravines; creeping slowly and suspiciously over the ridges; watching every rock that is big enough to shelter a robber, and keeping a nervous finger on the lock of an antique musket, with a barrel seven feet long.

Up, up, and still up, we climb. Flat stepping-stones afford us insecure footing; for they

are as smooth as glass, and our animals are beginning to flag in the relentless heat. It is not only the flame of the sun that pours down upon us from dawn to dark, but the oven-like crust under foot sends up a glow so intense that objects at a little distance seem to dance in it; and the eyes, shut against the garish light, sting with a sharp agony.

We followed the painful track of the Kedron. Had the valley, or gap, been burned out by a torrent of fire, instead of gutted by water, it would scarcely have presented a more forbidding spectacle. We descended into the frightful gorge, and followed the dry bed of the stream for some distance; we turned to the right and to the left, and often lost sight of one another for a few moments, during which time we began to realize the unspeakable loneliness of the wilderness.

The fissure of the Kedron, half a thousand feet in depth, and very narrow, has been the haunt of hermits and pious solitaries for many centuries. They have followed closely in the footsteps of St. John, and to-day the monks of Mar Saba are almost as frugal and as fervent as the young man who went down to Jericho to proclaim the Word, more than eighteen hundred years ago.

As we came upon the heights, we twice or thrice caught glimpses of the Dead Sea far

below us; glimpses that were like visions of paradise—fatal to the joy of him that is denied admittance. Then came a distant view of a small tomb on the summit of a ridge above the Kedron,—a spot very sacred in the eyes of the Mohammedans; for it is their tomb of Moses, and Moses is much to them. Christians question the authenticity of this site, and endeavor to prove their case by the geography of Holy Writ; but of the two supposed sites of the Prophet's tomb, this of the Mohammedans is the more popular.

The Bedouins! By and by, our track—if so shadowy a course may be called even a track—lay over a ridge, and through a long stretch of desert, that glowed like the disk of a highly-burnished shield. The air was charged with flame; it flashed in our faces like powder; it shone through out shut eyelids—a crimson light, that blinded us, and half consumed our eyes in their sockets.

Dark-smoked glasses afforded little relief; and through the clouded glass I saw afar off, in the midst of this blazing desert, a cluster of black tents stretched lightly over slender poles, like so many spider webs, coated thick with dust. These tents afforded meagre shelter, for they were without sides, and of scanty compass, being indeed little better than large parasols, planted in the sand—but how we eyed them!

It was the Bedouin at home, the pest of the wilderness; for he alone is the unconquerable master of all this desolation. He knows the undiscovered chambers beneath the cliffs, out of the glare of day, beside the living spring, where he may gather his tribe together, and baffle the most vigilant pursuers. He can starve you out of his realm; choke or poison the springs; assault you in narrow passes, where escape is utterly impossible. He sits in the fierce heat, and braves the terrible light with the sharp, unwinking eye of the eagle; he basks in the sun—he feeds on it, and on little else, save air and goat's milk. He is a salamander and a fatalist, and bears a charmed life.

I do not find his grave by the wayside—this fire-fed Bedouin. I half believe that he is hatched in the hot sand, like an ostrich; that he lives a thousand years on the chameleon's dish, and is then consumed away—being at white heat—and out of his ashes springs his phoenix son.

Such is the dweller in the black tents,—the mute nomadian, whose cat-like tread upon the desert leaves no track behind. Son of the sun, wedded to the daughter of the moon, begetting sons as slim and as swift-footed as lizards, and holding forever this unlovely wilderness of fire and famine. He is the sum and substance of

the tribe of Esau; for Esau was a hairy man, and as unpopular as a goat.

Instinctively we drew closer to one another. The muleteer had dropped behind; it was as much as he could do to save himself and his beast from running down-hill in a river of sweat; he, however, quickened his pace, and beat the pack-animal roundly, so as to keep within hailing distance so long as the black tents were visible.

We saw nothing of the Bedouins. They may have been absent on a foraging expedition; or were possibly sleeping, after having gorged themselves on a leek and a chip of black bread, picked up in the wake of the last caravan; but, more likely, they thought our party too unpromising to make an attack worth their while; and, then, our sheik was a favorite among them, for he levied large assessments on the pilgrims in the wilderness, and shared it with all these prowlers.

We groped our way through the dazzling desert, up a long, dispiriting hill beyond it, and came at last to a well famous for being the only one on the route. We were parched to the core, and hastened to approach this fountain of refreshment. Alas! we found a cistern—it was not a spring—standing level with the road, so that one might easily walk into it on a dark night. It was a dozen feet

deep, half filled with *débris* blown in from the highway, and holding about twelve inches of thick, green-mantled water, stirred from time to time by sluggish newts. It was probably in such a pit as this that Joseph was hidden by his brethren; for such water-holds are scattered throughout the country, and many of them are dry.

This was our oasis! We had been looking forward to it for an almost endless hour. Now, indeed, our muleteer was far down the mountain trail; once out of the range of the black tents, he devoted himself to perspiration and profanity, and his delay was provoking us past belief. He had the wine, the bread and the cheese, and all that maketh glad the heart, and softeneth the weariness of the desert.

It was then we panted for the water-brooks; it was then, also, that we reviled the muleteer and all his ancestors; but we suddenly grew close-mouthed, for fear of forgetting ourselves in the way—the very way over which St. John the Baptist must have passed again and again. Ah! only to have heard “the voice of one crying in the wilderness” at that hour, whatever may have been his cry. We were sick of the heat and the silence; anhungered and athirst; the way was long and wild, and every moment we grew worse and worse, both man and beast.

He came at last, the laggard! bringing salva-



tion with him, in the shape of wine heated hot in the bottle, and cakes of cheese reduced to an oily paste. We ate and drank with gratitude and avidity, and then we lay down in the shadow of a great rock, in a weary land, and slept for full twenty minutes. The rock was red-hot; the shadow was so narrow and so thin that there was scarcely enough of it to go round; but we shared it equally, and were saved.

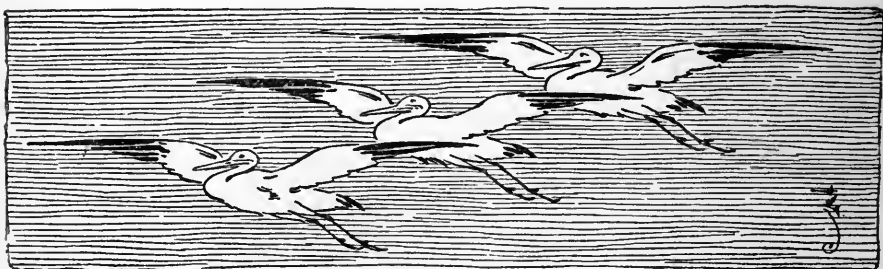
When we resumed our journey, afternoon shadows—real shadows, hanging like long cloaks from the shoulders of the mountains—thrilled us with a perceptible change in the temperature as we crept under their hems.

Once only we met signs of life after we broke camp on the mountain. A dozen storks were sailing among the chasms about us; and sailing so leisurely that it seemed as if the wind were wafting them whither it listed, and that they were as unmindful of their course as so many balloons might have been. Sometimes a group of them settled awkwardly on the rocks in front of us; and waited for us to come up to them, when they would suddenly leap into the air, and slide away on heavy and powerful wings.

I was so delighted to meet with these fine old birds—birds of good omen and of agreeable disposition—that I halted in the trail, and lost

sight of the caravan, that had rounded a point some distance in advance. The trail was poor enough, and so indistinct that I found it difficult to pick my way alone among the loose stones, and over the slippery, water-worn terraces of the mountain.

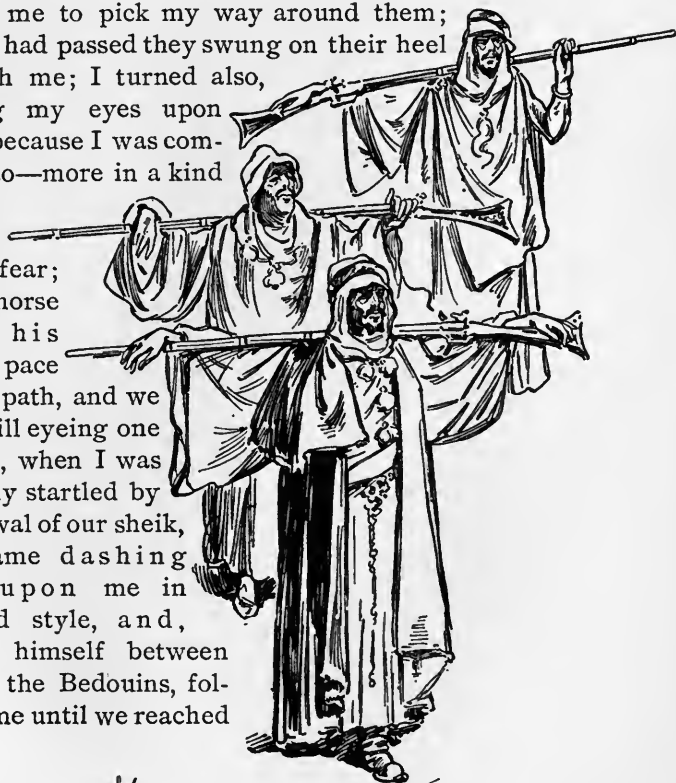
At this moment I came abruptly face to face with three young Bedouins, who were on foot, —each with his long carbine balanced back of his neck, and his two arms, stretched wide as



if in crucifixion, spread upon barrel and butt. They sauntered listlessly forward, while a delicious chill ran through me; I knew that these very fellows had again and again turned swiftly upon the unsuspecting traveler, dragged him from the saddle, stripped him naked, and then beaten and left him by the wayside to his fate. The stripping alone, at such a time, and in such a place, would result in tortures indescribable; for the sun is merci-

less. Death would very likely follow such an exposure, as it not unfrequently does when animals are urged on in the hottest hours of the day.

Those Bedouins looked at me with a stare that was as meaningless as the face of a stone god. They stood stock-still in the path, compelling me to pick my way around them; when I had passed they swung on their heel to watch me; I turned also, riveting my eyes upon them, because I was compelled to—more in a kind of fascination than in fear; but my horse kept his steady pace up the path, and we were still eyeing one another, when I was suddenly startled by the arrival of our sheik, who came dashing down upon me in splendid style, and, placing himself between me and the Bedouins, followed me until we reached



BEDOUINS.

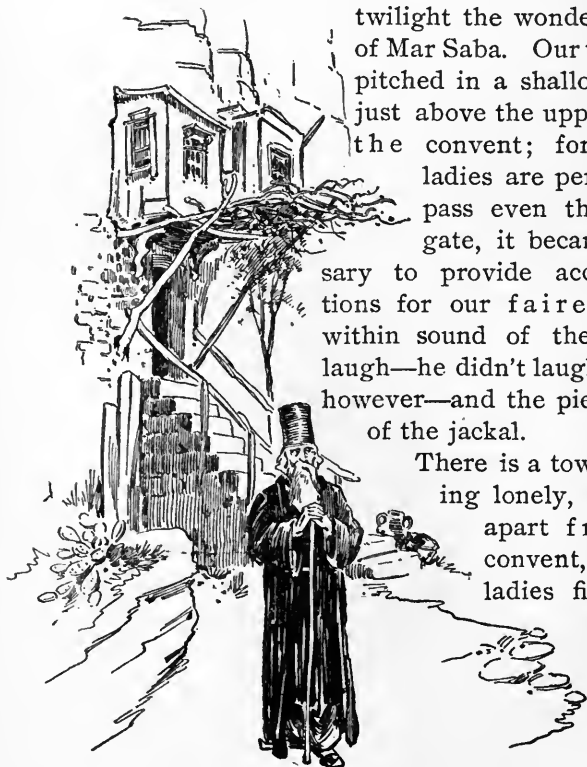
the caravan, which had come to a full stop, and was much concerned at my delay.

I wonder if most of the brilliant adventures with which the Syrian traveler enlivens his pages are as tame in reality as my own hair-breadth escape?

When we reached the deep gorge of the Kedron it was flooded with shadows, for the hour was late; out of these shadows we rode to the verge of a cliff, and saw in the delicious

twilight the wonderful walls of Mar Saba. Our tents were pitched in a shallow ravine, just above the upper wall of the convent; for, as no ladies are permitted to pass even the outer gate, it became necessary to provide accommodations for our fairer friends within sound of the hyena's laugh—he didn't laugh at them, however—and the piercing cry of the jackal.

There is a tower standing lonely, somewhat apart from the convent, where ladies find excellent shel-



AN ENTRANCE AT MAR SABA.

ter, if they prefer it to the cleaner and more cosy tents. From the battlements of the tower the inquisitive guest, if there be any such, may look over the high walls into the labyrinths of grottoes, galleries and gardens that are clinging to the face of the cliff below. Of course, we of the sterner sex found no difficulty in penetrating even to the very bowels of this remarkable refuge of the world-weary.

There is nothing just like it elsewhere; the gorge of the Kedron, a thousand feet or more in depth, looks as if it had been opened through miraculous agency, and might shut again some day. It is a peep between the pages of a mystical volume—a glimpse only, that leaves one more mystified than ever.

The gorge is but a few yards broad at the bottom, and one might easily cast a stone to the opposite bluff while perched upon its dizzy brink. Down one side of this gorge, over a surface that is almost perpendicular, are distributed the numerous—I had almost said innumerable—chapels, courts, chambers, galleries, and a thousand architectural surprises and eccentricities, such as one would imagine most likely to grow wild, or go wild, in the wilderness.

A village turned upon end, and plastered to the face of a high wall, would not astonish us more. They have built, like swallows, in

a sea-cliff, these monks of the desert; they have fortified themselves, that the world, the flesh, and the devil may not prevail against them; they have set up a high watch-tower in their very midst, where a keen-eyed Brother is always upon the look-out to give warning of the approach of the enemy.

They have cut themselves off from the bed of the gorge by a clean leap of six hundred feet; the upper walls of their hermitages overlap the heights above the gorge. There is nothing higher than they: they actually seem to be hanging in the air over that frightful chasm; yet there they are so much at their ease that they may come out of their tiny cells in the cliff onto tiny balconies, or porches, and sit and brood like martins.

They disappear in one part of the precipice, and presently come to the surface in a new place; they drop from terrace to terrace, and climb from floor to roof, from roof to tower, back and forth continually, like white mice. One is never weary of watching them, for they are never all at rest; it is as if they had the power of flying with invisible wings; for however they get from one martin-box to another is past finding out.

The truth is, the whole face of the cliff is like an ant-hill; there are hidden galleries and secret passages that connect every part of the

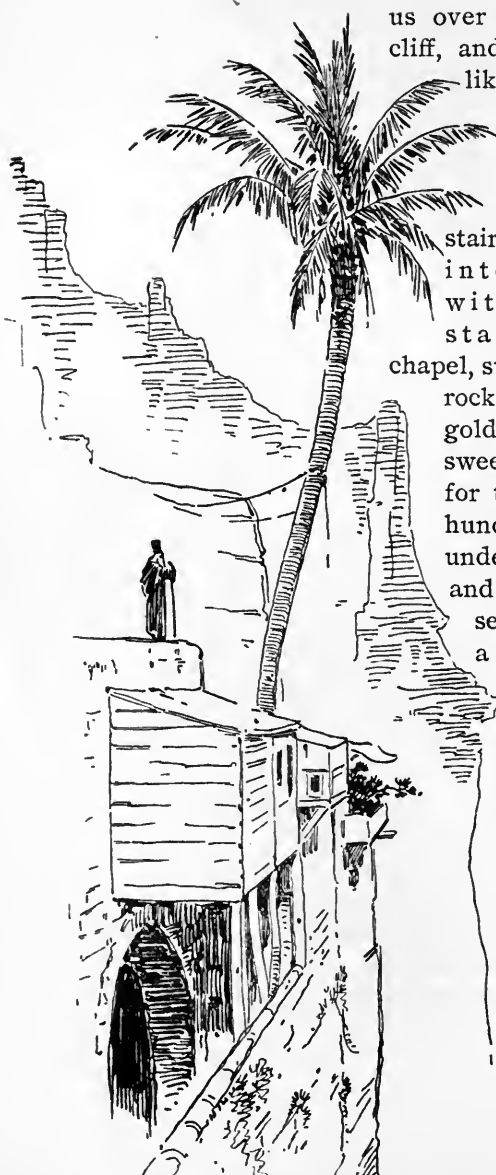
vast settlement; yet no one but a monk who has studied the chart can possibly make his way through the labyrinthine mazes, or, once lost in the bewildering intricacies of the monastery, hope to find his way out again without a guide.

A letter of introduction is necessary to secure admission to Mar Saba. The Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem provides it. Having reached the monastery, we ring at the great gate on the top of the cliff. Some one looks out of the high tower, and takes an observation; we give a shout of friendly greeting, and wave our letter of introduction in the air. At this stage of the proceedings a huge key is dropped into the inner court, where an attendant, who is stationed within, and himself apparently under lock and key, takes it, and opens the outer gate—a few inches only; here he examines our passport—the letter of the Patriarch—and eyeing us suspiciously, lest peradventure we might be women in disguise, he somewhat ungraciously admits us.

Another gate still shuts us out from the convent, and our Bedouin is not permitted to come even thus far, for the place has on several occasions been the scene of hideous slaughter. The outer gate having been secured against the ladies, and our unbelieving retinue, we are at last given welcome by a monk, who is to pilot

us over the face of the cliff, and show us how, like the birds, they all live at Mar Saba.

What a climb it was!—down stairs, fifty of them, into a stone court with a chapel; up stairs into another chapel, sunk into the solid rock, all ablaze with golden lamps, and sweet with incense; for the bones of six hundred martyrs lie under the pavement, and part of them you see plainly through a heavy grating when the monk thrusts a flaming taper in amongst them. These martyrs were all hermits, and lived alone in peace with the swallows, until the Persian hordes



THE PALM OF MAR SABA.



fell upon them, slaughtered them to a man, and cast their bodies to the jackals in the abyss below.

Bridges leap from chamber to chamber, spanning fearful depths; tunnels dart through the cliffs, and in the sides of the tunnels are windows cut through the solid rock, looking out upon the most desolate spot in the world; and there are little doors—oh! so many of them—opening out of cells just big enough to creep into, and curl up in a cosy heap.

Mar Saba, or St. Sabas, Abbott, was born in Cappadocia in the 5th century. He renounced the world in his eighth year, and after ten years of monastic life, which he found too lax for his ascetic soul, he fled to this laura of St. Euthymius, in the Kedron gorge; but the elder Saint thought the youth "too young to continue in his laura with the anchorites, so extreme a solitude being only proper for the most perfect; for a laura consisted of a cluster of separate cells, or hermitages, in the desert," and this was one of the wildest and most secluded of them all. By and by the lad accomplished his aim, and this amazing hive of monks grew out of the enthusiasm of the young Saint, who long before his death had achieved the fame he despised, and was surrounded by hosts of holy hermits, who emulated their spiritual head in the severity and simplicity of their lives.

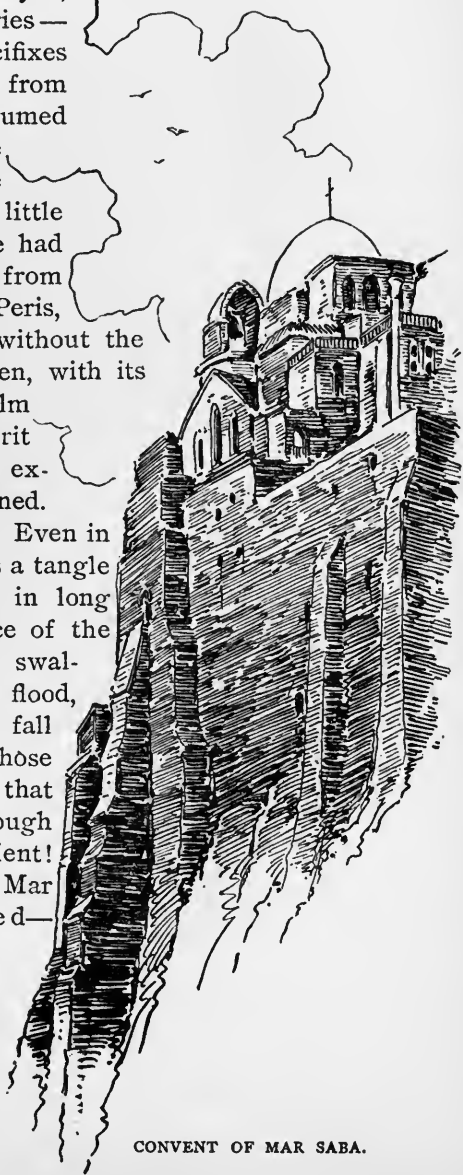
The Rev. Alban Butler tells this episode in the life of the Saint: He had once gone into a cave to pray. "It happened to be the den of a huge lion. At midnight the beast came in, and finding his guest, dared not to touch him, but, taking him gently by his garments, plucked him as if it had been to draw him out. The Saint was noways affrighted or troubled, but began leisurely, and with much devotion, to recite aloud the midnight Psalms. The lion went out, and, when the holy man had finished Matins, came in again, and pulled him by the skirts of his clothes, as he had done before. The Saint spoke to the beast, and said the place was big enough to hold them both. The lion at these words departed, and returned no more."

Fourteen centuries later it was my singular happiness to hear this very legend from the lips of the monk of the laura, as we sat together in the cave of St. Sabas and the lion.

There is a solitary palm tree reigning over one of the small garden terraces, and this palm is said to have been planted by St. Sabas himself. The monk-guide assured me that such was the case; then he took me up stairs and down stairs, through trap-doors into subterranean passages full of surprises and queer smells; he gave me *rakee* (the strong drink of the East), and a pipe on one of the airy bal-

conies overhanging the abyss; and brought me rosaries—Greek rosaries—and crucifixes carved by the monks from Oriental wood, and perfumed with fragrant gums. He sold us all as much as he could, and then begged a little more for charity—but he had well earned all he got from our caravan; for the Peris, who were disconsolate without the gates of this Greek Eden, with its one lonely and lovely palm tree, discouraged the spirit of generosity which the extraordinary place awakened.

How marvelous it is! Even in the blazing sunshine it is a tangle of shadows that hang in long fringes from the cornice of the cliff. By twilight it is swallowed up in a purple flood, through which the stars fall like sparkling dew,—those showers of restless stars that are forever darting through the skies of the Orient! When the moon is full, Mar Saba is spiritualized—



CONVENT OF MAR SABA.

wrapped in a silence as profound as death; it is like a vision of that heavenly home which the devotee, hopeless of finding among the habitations of men, is driven to seek even in the uttermost solitude of the desert.

We are but three hours' ride from Jerusalem, and thither bound; grave disappointments are to follow, but at Mar Saba we were filled with

delight; and when we

took our last

look at the an-

tique laura, in

the full glow of the

moon, it was like an ex-

quisite relief in palest-

tinted marble, chiseled

by the hands of gods who thus,

with a single stroke, achieved

the delight and the des-

pair of Art.

Gethsemane! Had

you ever a vision of a

fair garden grown to

seed—a grove of gaunt,

gray olives, with boughs

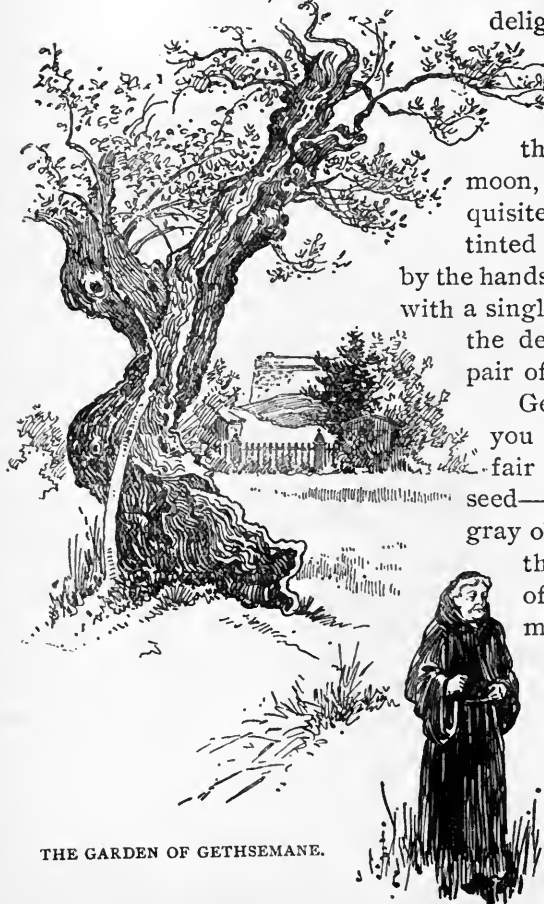
that look like puffs

of smoke in the

moonlight, and like

sprays of silver in

the sunshine?



THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

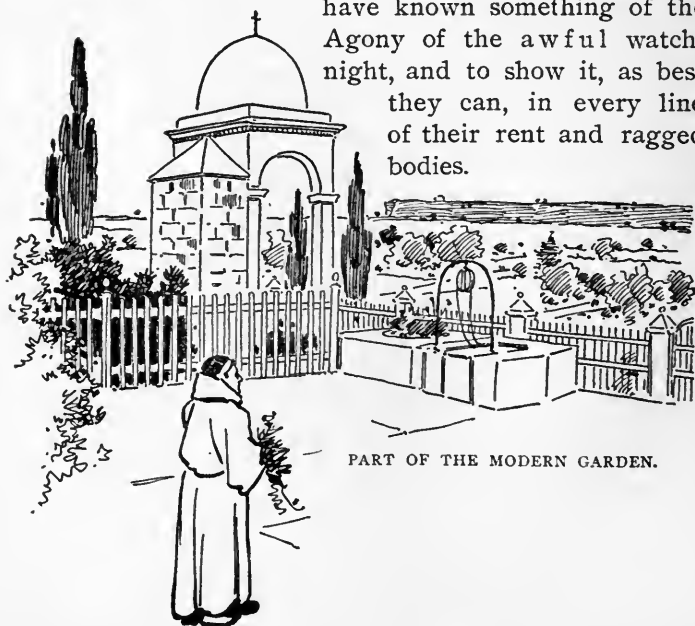
A garden not over-visited, flooded with tall, rich grass, through which a narrow path is scarcely broken under the low-hanging branches—a narrow path, leading on and on, through silence and solitude, to the mother-tree, in whose mossy lap you are wont to sit and dream; a garden where the sparrows brood, and the rooks speak in a hoarse whisper, and the lizard is unafraid;—a garden where the sunshine falls more softly than ever; where the wind is never rude; where the rain descends in showers mellow and musical;—a restful garden, the haunt of the weary; where the sorrowful seek consolation, and find it unawares; where the faint take heart, and the boisterous become gentle, because angels sit and watch unseen at the four corners thereof, with slender fingers pressed upon their lips.

The wall of this garden is broken, and overwhelmed with myrtles. You are free to enter and depart at whatever hour you will; but there you sit in the midst of it, and look out under the motionless boughs, seeing upon the hill-top, not far away, that city before whose walls the kingdoms of the earth are humbled—the Holy City, whose story is forever celebrated in glorious and triumphant song. This is the Gethsemane I have longed for!

Behold the Gethsemane I have found:—an enclosure about seventy paces in circumfer-

ence, surrounded by a high stone wall; there is one small door in the wall, on the upper side of the garden, against the Mount of Olives. A knock at this door summons a Franciscan friar, who unlocks it, and invites you to a *prim parterre*, with asphaltum walks, and stiff flower-plots carefully fenced in. Seven olive trees, torn almost to shreds, with their feeble limbs propped up and bound together, stand in the centre of the enclosure.

The stations of the Cross are ranged about the wall. The Brother admits you, if you desire it—and of course every one does—into the inner, the inmost garden, so that you may approach the trees, and even touch them with your hand. These venerable olives seem to have known something of the Agony of the awful watch-night, and to show it, as best they can, in every line of their rent and ragged bodies.



PART OF THE MODERN GARDEN.

The friar gathers a few flowers of the many he carefully cultivates; you pay him a franc and withdraw, because there is another knock at the little door in the wall; and the gentle keeper, who has grown worldly-wise for all his vows of unworldliness, does not like to leave you alone in his flower-beds, and within reach of the trees, whose very bones have been picked again and again by devout curio hunters.

You may see, if you like, without the walls, the spot where Peter, James, and John slept when they should have watched; and near to it the column in memory of the kiss of Judas. Yonder is the cavern of the Sweat of Blood; and close against it, far down in the bowels of the earth, is the tomb of the Blessed Virgin, and of St. Joseph, and of the parents of Our Lady.

Over the wall, on the one hand, you see Jerusalem; on the other is the Mount of Olives—the Garden of Gethsemane is less than half-way up its slope. Beneath you is the Valley of Jehoshaphat, with its tombs of the prophets, and of Absalom, St. James, Zacharias, and a host of nameless Jewish and Mohammedan dead—this is all. But this is enough to dismiss from your memory all traces of the consoling vision over which you have again and again dreamed your beautiful and pathetic dream.

Long ago a devotee told me, while his eye glistened with the tear of sensibility, that he had promised to pen the idol of his heart a long letter, written within the shadow of those grief-stricken and passion-torn trees in the Garden of Olives. I wonder if he did so? I wonder if his heart came near to breaking then, as it very properly should; or if the loud and impatient and business-like knocking at the locked door disturbed him? I wonder—oh! I wonder if the friar, waiting impatiently for him to turn his period, and the shuffling feet of the frequent guest, robbed the place of the last vestiges of sanctity, as was certainly the case when I tarried there for a half hour or more?

As I recall that visit now, I find myself dwelling upon it with more composure than was possible at first; and it may be that I shall be permitted to return to my visionary garden in the twilight of the hereafter, and sit in the old seat, and look out from under melancholy boughs,—not exactly in the old way, perhaps, but with a more real and a sincerer sorrow for the shade of the unforgotten past.

Olivet! It is from the summit of the Mount of Olives that the familiar and the most impressive view of the Holy City is obtained. Not only is the pano-



MOSQUE AND CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION,  
MOUNT OF OLIVES.



rama of Jerusalem, from this point of sight, singularly beautiful, but the eye roams over hill and dale to the edge of the wide horizon, and rests at last in the deep, dark valley of Sodom, where the Dead Sea lies like a sheet of molten lead, nearly four thousand feet below the brow of Olivet.

Whatever may be said of the shrines in and about Zion—perhaps there is not one of the thousand whose identity is established beyond question—there can be no shadow of doubt thrown upon the traditions of this holy hill. Leaving the veritable Rock of the Ascension out of the argument, and ignoring the colossal footprint of Christ impressed thereon, the fact remains, that there stands Jerusalem, or what is left of it; and here is Olivet, separated from the Temple platform by the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Here He must have stood and gazed upon the city that He loved; here He wept over it, when He thought on the fall thereof.

The summit of Olivet is crowned by a clumsy and irregular building, half chapel, half mosque—all that is left of the work begun by Constantine, and continued by the Crusaders. Let us enter. We knock at a gate in the outer wall of a court; a Mohammedan admits us. A small, bare chapel in the centre of the court—a chapel which covers a naked rock worn smooth by the lips of millions of pilgrims—is

the property of the Mohammedans, who graciously permit the Christians to celebrate Mass in it on certain days; and the Armenians, Copts, Syrians, and Greeks have each their allotted corner for prayer.

A door in the court opens into a house of dervishes—Mohammedan monks—which occupies the site of a former Augustinian abbey. The minaret of this Moslem monastery is the only tower on Olivet; from it the eye is captivated by the splendor and variety of the landscape, lit as it is by sharp bursts of sunshine, or veiled by the brisk showers that are continually trailing across the hills.

Just below the brow of Olivet, on the slope toward the Valley of the Jordan, is hidden the village of Bethany. Not a point of land, not a shadowy depression but is hallowed by association with some event in sacred history, the mere mention of which is sure to recall the first thrills of delight, not unmixed with awe, with which we were wont to listen in childhood; for that was long before those scenes had grown familiar and proportionately commonplace.

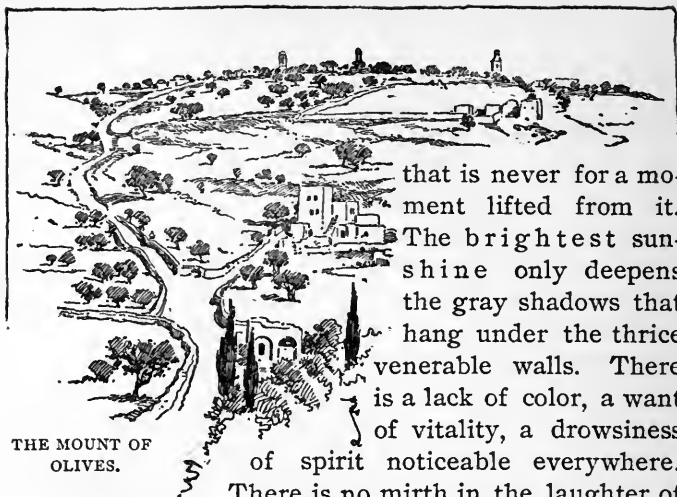
A few tents are usually pitched upon the slopes of Olivet during the season of the pilgrimages; there are many who never enter a monastery or hotel so long as they are in Palestine and Syria, but lead a picturesque

camp-life from the hour they land at Jaffa till they take ship again at Beirout, after their return from Damascus.

The olive, the fig, and the carob are scattered over the mountain; a few apricot, almond, terebinth and hawthorn trees have struck root in the stony soil; the place is open to the world: one rides at will in the road, or across fields; plucks sprigs from the olives, that are, for the most part, within easy reach from the saddle. Groups of Syrian women gather under the branches, and spend the afternoon in magpie-gossip. Children play games, but they are never noisy ones in this sad and sacred land; many of these little ones have with them pet lambs, washed as white as snow, and some of them with their wool dyed scarlet and orange and blue, in honor of Easter Day.

Pilgrims, caravans and Turkish soldiers—the latter cheered by wild, discordant music—pass over the roads that girdle the mountain; they are a prominent feature in the spectacle that is ever changing, and that is watched in silence by the listless multitude. Many a nargileh is smoked in peace under the shade of the olives on the mountain by the “place of weeping,” or at the scene of the Sermon on the Mount, and the convent that marks the spot where Our Lord taught His prayer to the disciples.

A spell seems to brood over the City—a spell



THE MOUNT OF  
OLIVES.

that is never for a moment lifted from it. The brightest sunshine only deepens the gray shadows that hang under the thrice venerable walls. There is a lack of color, a want of vitality, a drowsiness of spirit noticeable everywhere.

There is no mirth in the laughter of the people—if indeed they ever laugh at all: I do not now remember having seen so much or so little as a smile; there is no sparkle in their wit, no buoyancy in their step.

The hush of an “eternal Sabbath”—I do not mean the Sunday of the Christian world, which is a day of restful joy; but the awful hush of the deep-blue New England Sabbath—broods over the city like a curse, and all the splendor of Oriental pageantry is not able to give it life or color. The poetry has died out of it; so have the love and charity that were first taught there. I would as soon think of laughing at a funeral as of trying to be decently cheerful in Jerusalem.

O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Apart from the

glory and the shame of her share in the triumph of the King of kings, she is alone the city of all cities. David exalted her, Nehemiah mourned over her, Titus was concerned about her, the Saracens took pride in her, and she inspired the enthusiasm of the Crusaders; but I believe not a soul comes to her now without suffering a sore disappointment, or quits her without uttering a sigh of relief.

He will remember her all the days of his life, and be glad that his pilgrimage is over; and he will point with a kind of selfish joy to the crucifix or the Madonna, or the crest or monogram branded in his arm, as an everlasting token of his *hadjiship*—he is worthy of the title of *hadj*i now;—but he will remember also how he sat alone on the slopes of Olivet, above the Garden of Olives, over against the city, and for the life of him could think of nothing more enlivening or more appropriate than these lines of the grand old hymn:

Jerusalem! Jerusalem!  
 Enthronéd once on high;  
 Thou favored home of God on earth,  
 Thou heaven below the sky!  
 Now brought to bondage with thy sons,  
 A curse and grief to see,  
 Jerusalem! Jerusalem!  
 Our tears shall flow for thee.

The Way of Pain! From the walls of every church and chapel in Christendom hang pious

representatives of Our Lord's Passion and Death. Even the humblest of these prints or paintings have power to touch the hearts of the faithful, who follow in solemn procession the priest as he makes his holy round, with crucifix and flickering taper, and devotional refrain. Any one who has witnessed the pathetic celebration of the Way of the Cross, and especially he who has seen with his own eyes the tearful penitents as they painfully ascend the Holy Stairs, now sacredly enshrined in Rome, would naturally suppose that the *Via Dolorosa* must be held in such reverence by people of all sects and creeds who believe in the divinity of Our

Lord, that anything like a show of disrespect would be visited with instant reproof, and possibly a just punishment. Alas! it is not so.

There are more evidences of heartfelt grief, of real reverence, and of genuine contrition in the poorest chapels in the land, on the evenings of the Fridays during Lent, than in that sacred season in the Way of Pain—the very way which Our Redeemer took when He passed up unto the mountain on which He died for us. Let us follow in His footsteps as best we



"TURKISH SOLDIERS,  
MOSLEM FELLOWS."

can, from the first to the last of the Fourteen Stations of the Cross.

St. Stephen's Gate—so called because the martyr was stoned to death just without it—is a massive, square tower, having a chamber with a groined roof. Through this chamber, which is level with the pavement of the street, pilgrims are continually passing from dawn to dark. The gate, or ponderous doors, open upon Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives. The place is also known as the "Gate of Our Lady Mary"; for over against Gethsemane, and visible from the threshold, where the sentry stands guard all day, is the holy tomb of the Blessed Virgin.

At this Gate, where one is shown a "footprint of Christ" in the guard-room, begins the *Via Dolorosa*—the Street or the Way of Pain. It is narrow and ill-paved, like all the streets of Jerusalem, and might almost be mistaken for the dry bed of a pebbly creek. It is torture to walk any length of time over the sharp, uneven stones; and dangerous to ride; for the badly shod beasts are always slipping or

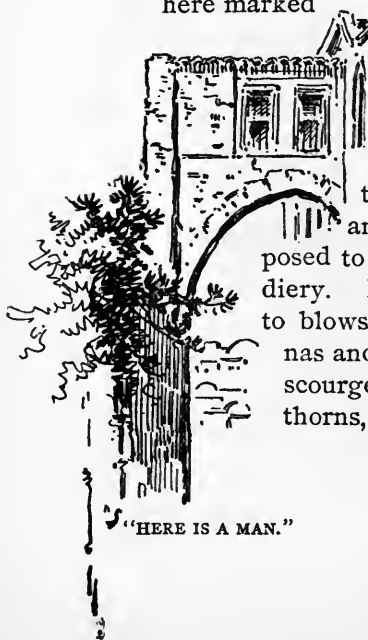


VIA DOLOROSA.

falling, and a fall on such a pavement is usually accompanied by serious consequences.

Turning your back upon St. Stephen's Gate, and entering the *Via Dolorosa*, you see immediately upon your left the gloomy walls of a barrack. Turkish soldiers, handsome but insolent fellows, throng the windows and hang about the doors; wild, discordant music—high-keyed bugles and shrill clarions, that seem to be blown by some piercing storm-wind—resounds through the great halls. As nearly every building in this venerable land is founded upon the ruins of some edifice, which, perhaps, in like manner sprang from the decay of a structure of remote and uncertain origin, so the ancient Castle of Antonia that once stood here marked the site of the Prætorium, the residence of Pilate.

Within this antiquated pile, surrounded by jeering infidels, is a small chapel. It is with some difficulty that the pilgrim finds his way to it, and he is not infrequently exposed to the insults of the brutal soldiery. Here, having been subjected to blows and blasphemies before Anas and Caiaphas, after having been scourged and crowned with cruel thorns, Our Lord was condemned



"HERE IS A MAN."



to death.—It is the First Station of the Cross.

Retreating from the chapel—one is soon driven hence by the tumult of the barrack—you pause for a few moments at the flight of steps by which you descend into the street. At the foot of these steps—the original flight is the one above referred to, now venerated in Rome, where it is known as the Holy Stairs—the purple garment was stripped from the shoulders that then and there assumed the burden of the Cross.—It is the Second Station of the Cross.

From this point, in imagination, we are accompanied by the riotous and enraged multitude, who on that dreadful day reviled the bleeding Body of Our Lord even unto the end.

Looking up the narrow street, which ascends slightly, on the right is a small shrine called the Chapel of the Scourging. Just beyond it is the high arch spanning the street, and supporting a small chamber with two windows. It is the *Ecce Homo* Arch, or the Arch of Pilate, where he uttered the words, “Behold the Man!”

Beyond this arch, still on the right side of the street, is the convent of Père Ratisbonne, whose charities while he lived were as famous as the story of his miraculous conversion from Judaism, in the Church of S. Andrea delle Fratti at Rome. The left side of the street is

a blank wall. Indeed, the *Via Dolorosa* seems more like an alley in the rear of a town than one of the most wonderful thoroughfares in the world.

The street shortly descends into the now shallow and almost imperceptible Tyropæon Valley, and turns to the left, under the wall of an ancient bath of the Sultan. Here stands a broken column—such an one as might be passed a thousand times unnoticed. Most of the mob of pedestrians seem to pay no heed to it, yet here Our Lord sank for the first time under the weight of His agonizing burden.—It is the Third Station of the Cross.

A little farther on stands the house of the poor man Lazarus; and still farther up the street, that of the rich Dives; between these houses, opposite a small lane diverging to the left, occurred the most terrible and the most tragic of meetings. At this point the afflicted Mother saw and recognized her Divine Son, but was not permitted to approach Him in this extremity. Anguish unutterable must have thrilled the glances which they exchanged.—It is the Fourth Station of the Cross.

It is quite impossible to dwell upon this theme while you are on the spot. A continual tide of traffic flows to and fro; man and beast crowd one another, and to pause in their midst is to blockade the busy way, to run the

risk of being overwhelmed by the ceaseless current of humanity, and to invite the reproaches of those to whom all the shrines of Jerusalem have become commonplace. Perhaps we, who try hardest to visit them with due reverence, are farthest from success; for we are most susceptible to distractions, and nowhere in the world are there more of these to be met with than in the Holy City.

Before the house of Dives Our Lord was relieved of His burden by Simon the Cyrenian.

Here there is a stone built into the wall,—a stone with a depression in its worn surface, said to have been formed by the hand of Christ, who, fainting and about to fall, stretched it forth to support Himself for a moment.—It is the Fifth Station of the Cross.

The Sixth Station is but a hundred paces



HOUSE OF LAZARUS.

hence; where holy Veronica, "compassionating our agonizing Redeemer, beholding His sacred Face livid with blows and covered with blood and sweat, presented a handkerchief." You who have seen this miraculous relic exposed under the mighty dome of St. Peter of the Vatican, will realize with what emotion one pauses at these frequent stations.

The tomb of St. Veronica is shown in an adjoining vault. In what fitter place could her relics find repository? The street grows narrower and more crooked; sometimes it passes under houses only two stories in height, as is not infrequently the case with the by-ways, and even the highways, of Jerusalem; sometimes it is arched over for a little space, as if to afford shelter in bad weather; then it veers to the right or to the left, narrowly escaping the corners or the bulging fronts of houses on either side.

The streets seem to run down between the buildings, that are huddled promiscuously together, as naturally as water-courses among the rocks—during heavy rains they are veritable water-courses;—but one never thinks of asking the why or the wherefore, let them turn and twist as they will.

Passing under one of the arches, we come to the Seventh Station, where Jesus fell the second time; and a little farther on is the

Eighth Station, where He counselled and consoled the daughters of Jerusalem. Here ends the *Via Dolorosa*.

Thus far the Stations have been discovered in the most natural manner; they are in no case prominent; on the contrary, one might easily pass them unnoticed; they are not at equal distances from one another.

The paroxysms of grief that beset Our Lord on that awful passage from the scourging to the Cross were such as might befall any innocent victim of the public rage. There must have been moments when His progress was stayed by the fury of the mob; moments when His faltering feet were hastened by the support of those who were ready and willing to suffer with Him, and even for Him—in His stead.

From the *Via Dolorosa* He was led into a narrow lane—a passage that connects the Way of Pain with the open space about Mount Calvary. In this dreadful passage, perhaps trampled upon by those who were pressing on behind Him, Jesus fell for the third time.—It is the Ninth Station.

Mount Calvary in those days may have been within or without the wall of the city. It is useless to discuss a question where opinions are bound to conflict to the end of time; it is sufficient to state that it is now within the city wall.

After leaving the Ninth Station you enter a court, which is flanked on three sides with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the religious houses attached thereto. In the vestibule of the church sit the Turkish guards, cross-legged, on their divans, smoking cigarettes, and looking insolently upon the people, who are constantly swarming in and out.

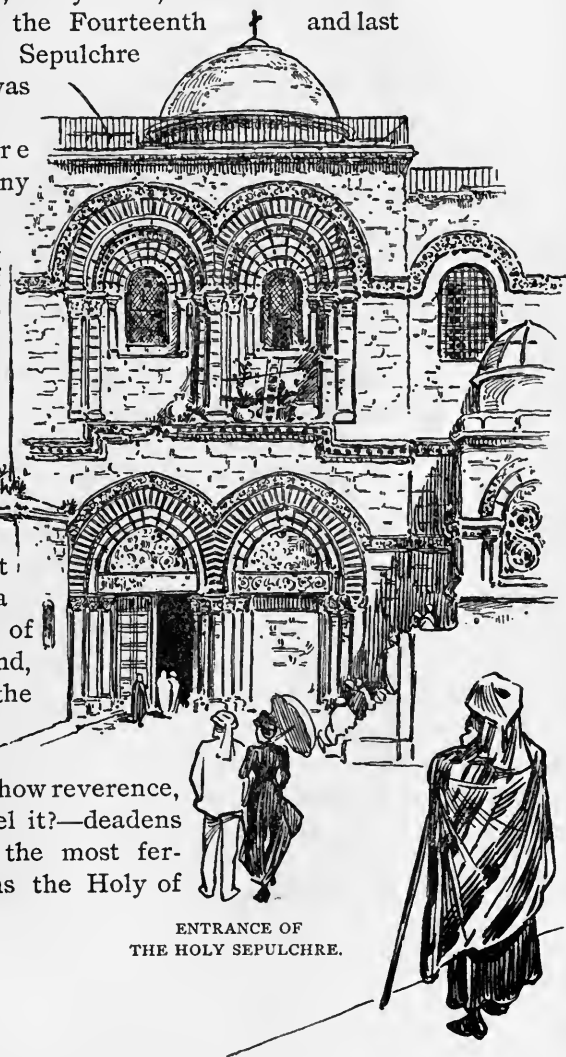
The immense building covers a multitude of shrines. In one corner of it is a large rock; this is the summit of the elevation known as Mount Calvary. The main floor of the church is but fourteen and one-half feet below the top of the rock; on this rock, the crown of which is as level as a floor, there is a cluster of exceedingly small chapels, reached by a flight of steps; one of these chapels, perhaps ten paces in length, and about as many in breadth, is Golgotha—"the place of a skull." A ring of stone in the pavement of the chapel marks the spot where Jesus was stripped of His garments.—It is the Tenth Station.

Three paces distant, at the Eleventh Station, He was nailed to the Cross. The Cross must have been lying with the foot upon the socket in the rock, so that when it was raised with the body of Our Lord, it slipped at once into place; and there, at the Twelfth Station, He hung until He died.

The Thirteenth Station is close at hand,

where His body was received in the descent from the Cross; and yonder, under the dome of the church, is the Fourteenth and last Station—the Sepulchre where He was laid.

There are doubtless many who visit Jerusalem without taking note of more than two or three of the Fourteen Stations. Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre are, of course, objects of interest to all; but a noticeable lack of reverence—and, shall I add, the difficulty one experiences in attempting to show reverence, or even to feel it?—deadens the fervor of the most fervent, and turns the Holy of



ENTRANCE OF  
THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

Holies into an almost profane exposition for the delectation of hosts of the idle and the curious. Alas that this should be so!

Oh! to be alone—to be utterly and absolutely alone, if but for one moment, on that Mount; to cast myself at the foot of the invisible but imperishable Cross; to escape from this fleshly bondage; brush from my eyes and from my heart and from my soul the carnal mists that obscure them, and realize, at last, the awful majesty of that hour when the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from top to bottom, and the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent; when the graves of the dead were opened, and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of their graves, after His resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many; and when they who watched, seeing these things, feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God."

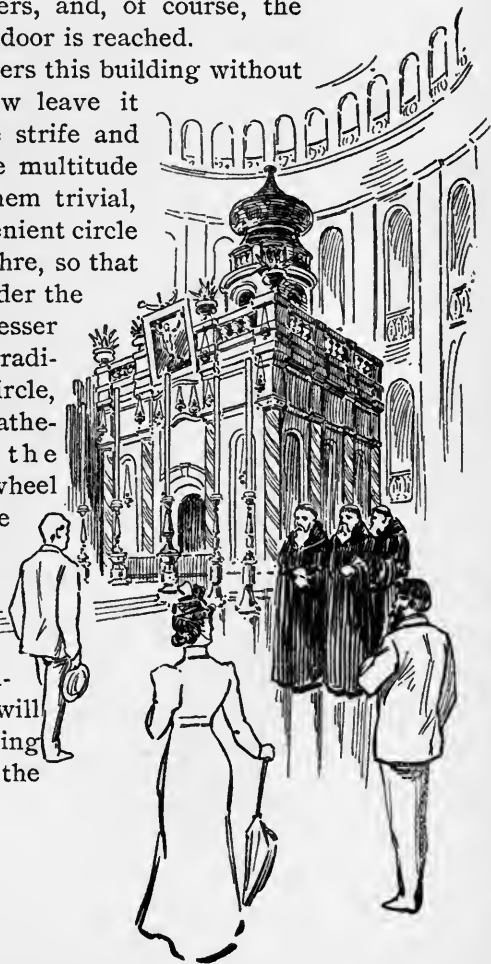
It is the most famous and the most remarkable of all churches which we are about to enter, by an insignificant door, apparently in the rear of the edifice. It is in reality the chief entrance, the only one open to the public,—the church has no façade.

The court before it is filled with venders of rosaries, images, carved shells, and pious pictures. These are chiefly made in Palestine; though many pilgrims bring with them wares,



out of the profits of the sale of which they hope to lighten the expenses of their pilgrimage. Passing through this throng of buyers and sellers, Christians and infidels, grave patriarchs, and fiery scoffers, and, of course, the inevitable beggar, the door is reached.

Probably no one enters this building without emotion; possibly, few leave it without disgust. The strife and contention within; the multitude of shrines, many of them trivial, congregated in a convenient circle about the Holy Sepulchre, so that from the sepulchre under the central dome the lesser shrines seem to have radiated in a convenient circle, and almost with the mathematical accuracy of the spokes of a cart-wheel where they strike the tire—these bewilder or appall one. But let me not dwell upon this theme, the cause of scandals innumerable, and one that will probably occasion nothing but discord so long as the world lasts.



In the vestibule of the church sit the Turkish guards, cross-legged on their divans, smoking cigarettes, and looking insolently upon the multitude that constantly swarm in and out. These guards eye you well, and privately ascertain your address from the dragoman who accompanies you; later in the week—they have learned your plans so far as the dragoman is acquainted with them—they will call upon you in person, and politely extort a somewhat liberal fee for having *protected* you during your visit to the Holy Sepulchre.

I have never met with a description of this church which gave me a definite impression of its interior. I do not believe it can be described, and shall not attempt it myself; indeed, the scenes that are sometimes witnessed there beggar description.

Within these walls, which should be held as the most sacred on earth; where peace should reign forever; and where, for the time being at least, all differences of creed should be forgotten, as we bow in common reverence before the tomb of the Redeemer who died for us—within this sanctuary there is confusion worse confounded; envy, malice, and all uncharitableness.

It is quite impossible to visit the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with any degree of reverence, or to quit it without a feeling of disap-

pointment, sorrow, and shame—at least during the Lenten season, and especially in Holy Week, and at Easter-tide. Were those Turkish soldiers not stationed at the church door, armed and on the watch, prepared to quell the first outbreak of fanaticism, it would be almost as much as a man's life is worth to venture into the sanctuary without a body-guard.

The building has been sacked more than once; it has been restored and enlarged at intervals, and enriched through the swelling enthusiasm of succeeding centuries; has been extended, in one direction or another, so as to embrace and cover this object of reverence, or that one of interest; and has thus, no doubt, gathered within its walls some shrines that could hardly have belonged there originally.

Within the church, grouped under the shadow of the chief shrine—the Holy Sepulchre itself—behold the brilliant congregation of lesser shrines that are located, each and all, but an easy stone's throw—nay, but a few yards from the portal of that Sepulchre. Mount Calvary, rising but fourteen and one-half feet above the pavement of the church, and containing, within the Chapel of the Raising of the Cross, the hole in the rock, silver-mounted, where the Cross stood, and the two holes for the crosses of the thieves; the cleft in the rock, with metal-tipped edge, where the

earth was rent on that dreadful day—a cleft which is said to extend to the very centre of the globe; the Chapel of the Agony, where Our Lord was nailed to the Cross; the spot where He was taken down from the Cross; the spot where the three Marys stood—all these are upon the little summit of the mountain, in one corner of the church.

Under Calvary, or Golgotha, is the tomb of Adam, the first man, upon whose head the Blood of Christ dripped through the cleft in the rock, thus restoring the dead to life. It is Adam's skull that is placed at the foot of a crucifix. Then there are the tombs of Melchisedek, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, Godfrey de Bouillon, and Baldwin,—all under the one roof.

You have only to walk a few paces, and you come upon shrines in such rapid succession that their names and number are quite distracting. Here is the place where Our Lord was crowned with thorns; a little farther on, the spot where He appeared to Mary Magdalene; then the pillar to which He was bound during the scourging; the slab on which His Body was laid for the anointing; the spot where He stood when He first appeared to His Blessed Mother, after His resurrection—a stone marking the very centre of the earth; the place from which the dust was taken, out of which Adam, the

first man, was formed; the place where Christ's garments were parted; the place where the True Cross was found, etc. I was told that to this day you are shown, if you choose to see it, the spot where the cock crew thrice.

These shrines within the church were mostly consecrated at the time of the visit of the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine, A. D. 326.

Is it a matter of wonder that, through sieges, vicissitudes, changes of government, and the perpetual strife among the fanatics of many and various creeds, the shrines have become somewhat confused?—no one need say anything harsher of them. They are divided, with scrupulous nicety as to number and value, among the Latins, Greeks, Armenians, Copts, Jacobites, Syrians, and Abyssinians. The decorations vary according to the national taste of the guardians of each shrine. Perhaps there is always over-much gilt and tinsel; this is especially the case with the interior of the Holy Sepulchre. But we cannot hope to agree upon matters of taste; it is individual in every instance.

After a hasty visit to the whole series of shrines, during which I had been up-stairs to Golgotha, and down-stairs to the Chapel of the Invention of the Cross, and was swept along with the strong current of sight-seers that gave

me no opportunity for even one moment of silent meditation at any shrine whatever, I came at last to the Holy Sepulchre, and paused at the threshold, awaiting my turn to enter.

The Holy Sepulchre! This shrine, as it now stands, is no sepulchre. There is no trace of a grotto, or of a cavity in the rock, or of the rock itself. Under the great dome of the church, in the centre of an amphitheatre, surrounded by two lofty galleries, with arches, pictures, statues, lamps, and banners, is a chapel; it resembles a mausoleum; it is sixteen sided, twenty-six feet in length by seventeen and one-half in breadth.

Guards stand at the small door of it, under a silken canopy that stretches nearly to one side of the dome, and among colossal candelabra; they busy themselves with the mob, that continually presses eagerly about the threshold of the Sepulchre.

For some time I was jostled to and fro by the excited multitude, rebuffed repeatedly by the uncivil guards, and irritated beyond measure by the rudeness and irreverence which prevail in Jerusalem, and especially in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

At length my turn came. Suddenly the guards, who until now seemed to have no interest in me, or in any one in particular, seized me, and assisted me in forcing an entrance,

against the will of another party, who insisted upon preceding me. Thus I found myself in a chamber, measuring sixteen feet by ten, which is called the Chapel of the Angel. In the centre of this chapel is a huge stone, said to be that which the angel rolled away from the mouth of the Sepulchre, and on which he was seen seated after Our Lord rose again from the dead.

The chapel was dimly lighted; a few figures were grouped about the stone, but I knew none of these—indeed it would have been difficult to distinguish one from another in that half light.

Some one emerged from a low door in the farther wall of the chamber; he filled the aperture for a moment, and then I saw a flood of light beyond him, and inhaled a delicious breath of incense. With breathless awe I stooped to enter the inner chapel, and to my inexpressible joy found that the sole occupant was a priest in splendid vestments, who stood as motionless as a statue, nor turned his face nor his glance as I approached him.

This chapel is but six and one-half feet in length by six in width. Numberless precious lamps swing from the low ceiling. Like living flowers, they seem to exhale exquisite perfumes. On the right of the chapel is an altar of marble; it is five feet in length, two feet in breadth, and three feet in height. The wall

above the altar is covered with gaudy reliefs and pictures, wrought in silver and gold. Mass is said here daily; the lamps burn forever; and forever there is one standing motionless, with gaze fixed upon that altar, and soul wrapped in a meditation that is deaf to the voices of this world; for this is the Tomb of Our Lord.

If there is one spot on earth more precious to me than all others,—one shrine which I have held most sacred, and the very thought of approaching which has ever filled me with awe, it is the Sepulchre of Our Lord.

I knelt by it, offering my handful of rosaries and pious objects, that they might receive a new and final virtue; and while I knelt, perfectly dazed at finding no grotto, no semblance of a tomb—nothing, in fact, but gaudy sculpture and a blaze of golden lamps—while I knelt there helplessly, hopelessly, striving to recollect myself, some one jostled me rudely, and I turned, to find two professional tourists “doing” the Sepulchre in a business way. They were evidently Americans, probably New Englanders, and noticeably non-Catholic. One of them, doubtless the husband of the lady who was as vulgarly curious as he, tapped one of the wonderful swinging lamps with his forefinger, and said in a voice quite audible: “I wonder if these are the genuine article, or only plated?”



Our few moments were soon over, but none too soon. A disorderly crowd impatiently awaited us without; and, with deranged garments, a ruffled temper, and a heart that was in nowise peaceful, I repaired to my monastery forthwith.

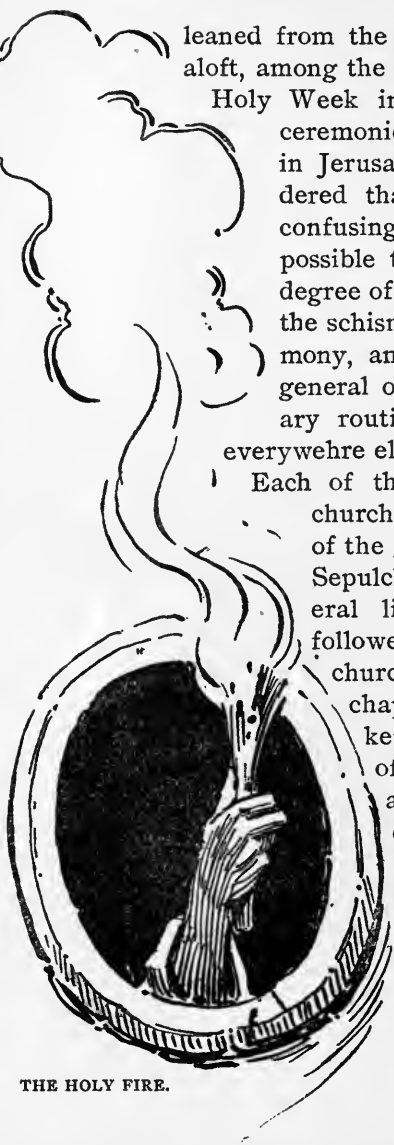
There is a pale, domed, and minareted mosque in the *Via Dolorosa*, just over the way from the convent of Père Ratisbonne. At dusk in the Holy City, at the close of a weary day of sight-seeing, I looked in vain for some testimony of the faith which sprang into life through the Passion and Cross of Our Lord.

The Way of Grief lay under my feet. To the right, hidden among the thousand low, gray roofs of the city, was the place of the Sepulchre; to the left, the Mount of the Transfiguration. It was there, from beginning to end—the profoundly melancholy history that passeth all understanding. I took it in at a glance; yet at that moment the only visible evidence of faith that I was able to discern, as far as my eyes could penetrate the accumulating shadows, was the forms of the devout Mohammedans prostrated upon their house-tops before the empty altars that stand over against Mecca; and the only sound I heard—a voice that rang long and clear, and high above the subsiding hum of the day's toil and traffic—was the triumphant cry of the *muezzin* as he

leaned from the gallery of his minaret, aloft, among the stars.

Holy Week in the Holy City! The ceremonies of this blessed season in Jerusalem are so strangely ordered that the effect is utterly confusing; I found it quite impossible to follow them with any degree of satisfaction. No two of the schismatic tribes work in harmony, and the consequence is a general overturn of the customary routine as observed almost everywehre else in the Christian world.

Each of the Oriental sects has a church or a chapel independent of the great Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and there the several liturgies are rigorously followed. We wandered from church to church, and from chapel to chapel, and were kept informed as to which of the many was the one affording the most interesting, if not the most edifying, spectacle. As a consequence, our days were full of weariness, and our nights without



THE HOLY FIRE.

rest; many a time and oft we sat us down in a corner, apart from the clamor of the multitude, and longed with ardor unspeakable for the sweet and sad solemnity of the offices as said and sung in the far-off and retired hamlets, of which no man knoweth, save only the contented souls who have been born and reared there.

The triangular sections of the floor of the Church of the Sepulchre allotted to the various branches of Christendom, are in Holy Week swarming with devotees of the several Churches, and the rites and ceremonies there practiced are diverting; but the space is limited, and the commotion a sore distraction.

Nor do the streets of the Holy City tend to prepare one for the meditations which should absorb the mind and the heart at such a time and in such a place. All the nations of the earth are gathered together in a perpetual pageant. Splendid costumes, worn by a pretentious people, who approach the Tomb of Our Lord with more pomp than the three Kings who sought His Crib, fairly dazzle the eyes. All the beasts of burden, save only the elephant, troop to and fro, magnificently caparisoned; and these bewilder the more humble worshipers, who crowd into nooks and corners at intervals, to escape the huge sides of swaying camels, or the sharp hoofs of frightened asses.

Easter was, indeed, a day of rejoicing—of tumultuous rejoicing within and without the city gates. At our breakfast plates, in the convent refectory, were placed Easter eggs, beautifully tinted and elaborately arabesqued, and each bore the legend “Jerusalem.” These, of course, we brought away with us as *souvenirs* of the most sacred season in the most sacred city on the earth.

We had also a blessed palm—it was an olive-branch from the Mount of Olives—and the document, nobly worded in resounding Latin, signed by the secretary of the Holy Land, and certifying that we had visited all the shrines, attended to our Easter duties, and were now indeed worthy to be called *hadji*, or pilgrim.

We had purchased leaflets bearing pressed flowers plucked in Gethsemane and at many of the holy places in and about the city; had visited for the last time the sites most sacred in our eyes, and were ready—yea, willing to go. It was a bewildering experience, that had again and again driven us to the verge of distraction. And no wonder; for some of the scenes we witnessed, though by no means pleasant in memory, are surely never to be forgotten. Let me describe one of these.

The miracle of the Holy Fire is the only occasion of any special importance, and this is certainly without a rival in Christendom.

Holy Saturday, the eve of Easter, is the day on which this miracle takes place. Thousands of Greek and Russian pilgrims visit Jerusalem during Holy Week; all these devotees make sure of seeing this famous miracle. The Church, on Good Friday, is thronged; many of those who are in the church on this day have with them mats, provisions, water, and cigarettes, and are thus enabled to spend the night in the temporary galleries erected under the lower arches of the rotunda, and to remain until after the miracle takes place, which is usually at 2.00 p. m., on Saturday. Meanwhile they smoke, chat—the uproar in the church is deafening—get into difficulty with those who seek to usurp their places, and are forcibly separated by the Turkish guards, who are on this occasion distributed thickly throughout the church.

The Russian pilgrims are, for the most part, a brutal and ignorant race, whose fanaticism on Holy Thursday knows no bound, save the wall of Turkish infantry that is drawn up around them, with fixed bayonets. As I was passing through the aisle of the church, on my way to the Latin convent adjoining, and through which I was to gain access to the upper gallery of the rotunda, I was overtaken by a mob of Russians, who were quite mad with excitement. They were naked to the waist, were linked

arm-in-arm, and were rushing round and round under the aisle, shrieking at the top of their voices. Had not a small body of soldiers

beaten them back with the butts of their muskets, I and the party I was with would probably have been trampled under foot by two-score maniacs. It was with the utmost difficulty that I gained the left porch, which had been reserved for me by a Syrian friend; and when I looked down upon the scene below, I wondered that the earth did not again open and swallow up the infamous spectacle.

The lamps within and without the sepulchre were extinguished; a few hundred of the more fervid Russians had been for hours hugging the walls of the Holy Sepulchre; some of them were lashed to it with ropes, lest the excited mob should sweep them away, or they be unable to retain their position in consequence of faintness and fatigue. A regiment of Turkish infantry surrounded the chapel, keeping an open passage quite around it,



THE ILLUMINATED CROSS.

and connecting with the Greek chapel opposite the door of the Holy Sepulchre.

As the hour of two drew near, the excitement increased. Already the Greek priests, having passed thrice around the sepulchre, chanting, had retired hastily to their chapel, under the protecting bayonets of the Turks. Meanwhile, the mad Russians, reeking with sweat, foaming at the mouth, dancing up and down, and shaking their fists at the walls of the sepulchre, shrieked at the top of their voices: "Jesus Christ has died for us! Jesus Christ has died for us!" This over and over, growing more and more wild at every cry; while they leaped into the air, clapping their hands, and beating one another in the utmost frenzy.

On the two sides of the sepulchre, near the entrance, are round or oval apertures, usually closed. On Holy Saturday these holes are open; it is the wish of every good Greek or Russian to get as near them as possible, for out of these apertures issues the holy fire.

• Finally, the priest enters the sepulchre, and extinguishes the lamps. At an uncertain period, terminating not far from 2.00 p. m., lighted tapers are thrust out of the apertures, and these tapers are supposed to have been lit by fire sent straight from heaven. In conse-

quence of this miracle, the fire is very precious, and it is the wish of every one present to get a portion of it as soon as possible. When the excitement below was at its height, the Russians were storming the walls of the sepulchre as if they would bring them down about their ears, the mob was suddenly stirred by an impulse; and at that moment I saw a bundle of tapers, enveloped in flames, thrust suddenly out of the aperture opposite me. All the throng, each with his bundle of tapers, rushed upon the fire; the guards beat them back again and again. The flames slowly spread; swift runners, with blazing torches, hurried into every part of the great church; ropes, with tapers at the end, were let down from the two galleries of the rotunda; the tapers were lighted and drawn up; the flames spread from arch to arch. In ten minutes from the moment the tapers were thrust from the Holy Sepulchre, the entire building was one hollow pyramid of flame. The air grew thick with smoke; the idea of escape was out of the question; the smoke and the excitement and rush of the mob must first subside. The half-naked Russians near the sepulchre smeared their faces and trunks with the melting and blazing wax. They believe that they are thus purified by fire, and report says they are never burned. Of this I know nothing, though I saw



them do wonders in the way of moulding burning wax with their hands.

In 1834, during this miracle of the Greek fire, while the church was crowded with excited fanatics, a panic occurred, in which nearly three hundred pilgrims were suffocated or trampled to death. It has now become the custom to clear the church, at the point of the bayonet, whenever blood has been shed within its sacred walls. But for this precaution on the part of the infidel government the Christians would probably exterminate themselves in the course of a very few years. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, during the miracle of the fire on Holy Saturday, is a vision of hell, such as even Dante might have shuddered at. Sick with the long fast and the uncommon excitement, I sought my quiet cell in the Austrian Hospice.

That night, while all the stars throbbed in the intensely blue—not blue-black—sky, I saw a cross of fire hovering over the city. It glowed with a radiance that dimmed the lustre of even the Syrian stars; it seemed to be floating in the air; it might have been supported in the arms of angels, for all I know. I looked again, and,



FANATICISM.

remembering that under that cross once stood the veritable Cross; that within the soft radiance of that sacred symbol occurred the scenes of Our Lord's Passion and Death, for a swift second or two came the flood-tide of emotion—the flood-tide that sweeps away all of the folly and the fiction and the mortification of the day's labor and pain. And that second or two, let it come but once in a lifetime, is worth the terrible shock (to faith and hope and charity) of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

The Syrian Coast! One may go overland to Nazareth, with tents and retainers, at no little risk and considerable expense; or he may take ship and follow the coast-line to the nearest port, at a great saving of time and trouble. I chose the latter course.

The many steamers—English, French, Austrian, Russian, and Italian—that touch along the Syrian coast before and after Easter, are loaded to the water's edge with pilgrims. For the most part these pilgrims are miserable beyond conception. They cover the decks; are crowded into the hold of the ship; fill the small boats that are swung to the davits over the vessel's side, and sit day after day in their wretched nests, fearing to quit them even for a moment, lest they be unable to regain them.

The accommodations are, in most cases, infamous; the overladen ships reek with foul



odors, and swarm with vermin. Even the first-class passengers are sometimes obliged to stop within the stuffy cabin, there being no room for exercise on deck, where the multitude are penned like sheep, and as patiently await the hour of their deliverance. A panic at such a time would doubtless result in the loss of hundreds of lives. I thought of this as our brave little Russian steamer, with the unpronounceable name, lay over to starboard in the port of Jaffa, and crept all the way up the coast with her side-lights under water.

Fourteen hundred unhappy souls were at the mercy of the winds and waves. Fortunately, the sea was as glass. I sincerely believe that one good roller, such as the Mediterranean heaves up on the slightest provocation, would have sent us clean over; and, though we were



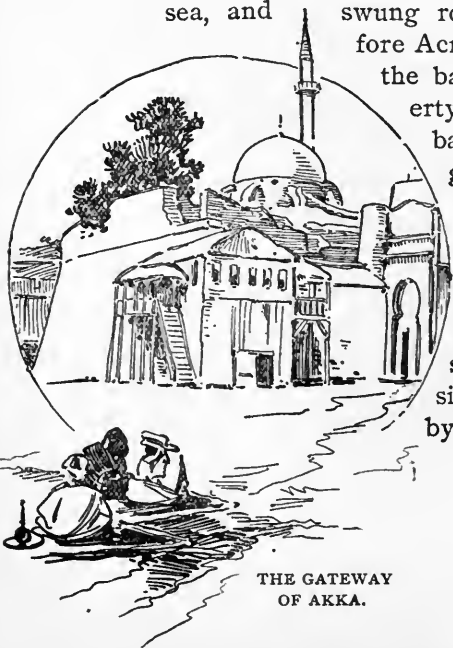
AKKA.

never very far from shore, we would probably have all gone to the bottom in a solid mass. Everybody tried to be indifferent to the danger that threatened us, and so the time wore on.

We watched the coast-line all the afternoon, and thought it moderately interesting. Sunset found us under a fine bluff at the point of a harbor. How we praised that dome-like rock towering in the east, flushed with the fading light! For the time we forgot our misery, and grew enthusiastic; but what wonder, inasmuch as this was Mount Carmel! As there were no passengers for Haifa—the little town that nestles at the foot of the sacred mountain—we crept on in the twilight over the smooth sea, and swung round in a shallow be-

fore Acre, on the other horn of the bay. Here I was at liberty to seek the shore, and bade adieu to the pilgrims, whose faces were set toward their far-distant homes.

All that is left of interest in Acre is the barest outline of its sanguinary history. Besieged again and again by Persians, Arabs, Cru-



THE GATEWAY  
OF AKKA.

saders, French, English, Austrians, and Turks, I wonder that a soul is left to inhabit so ill-fated a spot. The tribe of Ashur dwelt there; the Crusaders made it their chief point of entry; Napoleon I, after eight desperate assaults upon it, was at last obliged to abandon the siege. Ibrahim Pasha, with his Egyptian army, threw thirty-five thousand bombs into the town, but failed to enter it himself at that time.

In 1840 the united fleets of England, Austria, and Turkey trained their guns upon it, and let drive. A powder magazine exploded within the town, and two thousand Egyptians were blown into the air, a fountain of living blood. The place reeks with bloody memories, and it is a pleasure to quit it for a brisk ride of two hours and a half along the shore to Carmel.

Haifa, the little town at the foot of Mount Carmel, has bled in her day. Like Acre, her history is discolored all the way down from the time of the Phœnicians.

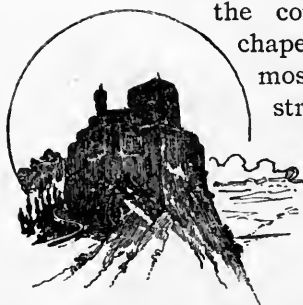
It is Carmel! A road winds through ancient olive orchards, along the base of the mountain; then there is a short, hard climb up steep steps cut in the rocky slope; a rest at the way-side-cross, or at one of the small chapels that dot the cliff; and there, under the bluest possible sky, above the bluest possible sea, alone on its wind-swept eyry stands the monastery.

The hospice is perched five hundred feet above the shore; the brow of Carmel soars twelve hundred feet higher, and tears the clouds into ribbons, when the wind is wild, and the sea breaking darkly and angrily at the foot of the mountain. Solomon knew the majestic beauty of this solitary sea-sentinel when he sang:

Thine head upon thee is like Carmel.

Elijah knew it when he gathered together at its base the priests of Baal, and gave proof of the omnipotence of the living God. From this height he looked out over the sea, and awaited the rising of the little cloud, "no bigger than a man's hand," but out of which was to issue the floods that followed those years of famine and drouth. In those days the Cison swelled suddenly—"that ancient river, the River Cison," which we forded down in the plain yonder.

Hermits were wont to flock thither, and dwell in the caves of Carmel. Pythagoras visited it, and tarried awhile; St. Louis made a pilgrimage to its hallowed heights. Then followed trials and tribulations—the slaughter of the monks who dwelt there; the sacking of the convent; the desecration of the chapel, which was converted into a mosque; and finally, the total destruction of the building by the Turks, who feared it might be



MOUNT CARMEL.

used as a hospital for the wounded of their enemies, as was once the case.

Thereupon Brother Giovanni Batista, of Frascati, set forth to gather money for the rebuilding of the holy house of his Order. For the space of fourteen years, he went hither and thither over the world, preaching, beseeching, gathering a little here, a little there, and finally living to see the ancient house restored and well fortified, and his Brothers as busy as bees in the hive on the serene slopes of Carmel.

Slipping more or less awkwardly down the steep path onto the plains that lie east of Mount Carmel, I dropped into a long revery, that was scarcely broken for the next eight and forty hours. There were many small villages, which we entered, and where we baited our horses; hearing the while the old, old story told over and over again, and finding it newer to-day than ever.

Here at Shunem, now known as Salem, a great woman of the village made a little chamber in the wall, and set there a bed, a stool, and a candlestick,—this is surely enough to furnish a prophet-chamber. When the child of her old age, smitten by sunstroke, was taken to his mother, “she set him on her knees until noon: and then he died.” What did that sorrowing mother in her extremity? She

hastened up into the heights of Carmel, and sought out the prophet whom she had befriended, and he gave her back her son again.

Yonder is Endor, where the astonishing witch kept company with her tribe of imps; and here is Nain, where Our Lord met the woman weeping, and, turning to the bier over which she wept, he said: "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise: and he that was dead sat up, and began to speak."

Through such scenes as these we come to Nazareth. The hills gather about it, as if to guard it from the eyes of the world. It nestles on a slope, among olive orchards, and meadows bright with flowers. Is it any wonder that we ride, Indian file, hour after hour, silently, thoughtfully, clipping the blossoms from the tall stalks, as we pass them at an easy gait?

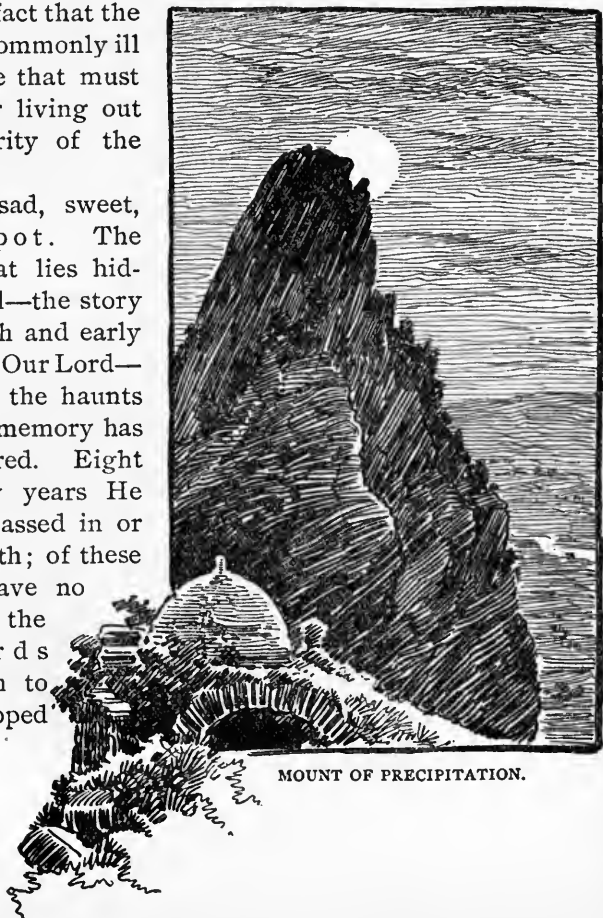
The birds sing to us; the flowers nod to us; we eat, drink, refresh ourselves by the wayside, and are even shown through the length and the breadth of the village, without saying anything, or caring to say anything—perhaps without having anything to say.

When it was all over—the grateful rest in Nazareth; the little pilgrimages to the workshop of St. Joseph; the house of Holy Mary, or rather the spot where it stood (for the house is now at Loreto in Italy; and there I had the



satisfaction of entering it alone, and realizing beyond question the very truth of its most marvelous history); after visiting the Fountain of the Blessed Virgin, the Mount of Precipitation, the Grotto of the Annunciation, and the shrines of minor interest, there is nothing to be seen or thought of in Nazareth save the unpleasant fact that the town is uncommonly ill kept for one that must make a fair living out of the charity of the faithful.

It is a sad, sweet, tranquil spot. The mystery that lies hidden from all—the story of the youth and early manhood of Our Lord—hovers over the haunts which His memory has made sacred. Eight and twenty years He may have passed in or near Nazareth; of these years we have no record save the few words which seem to have dropped



MOUNT OF PRECIPITATION.

almost carelessly from the pen of the scribe: "And the Child grew, and waxed strong, full of wisdom, and the grace of God was in Him. . . ." He "advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men."

That evasive passage is what seals our lips; is what awakens in us a profound longing to find for ourselves some revelation in the flowering sod under foot, the fragrant shrubs along the wayside that perfume the air as we press by them, or in the deep and unbroken silence of the hills that bend over Nazareth, and keep forever and forever the secret from the world.

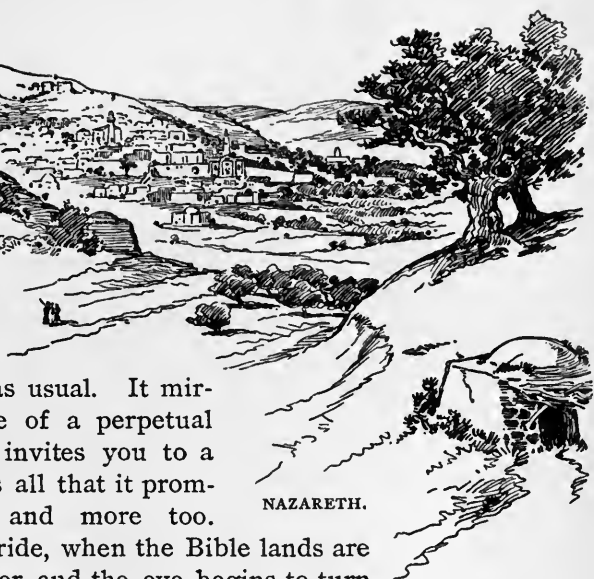
Mount Tabor looks down upon us as we journey toward Genesareth, or Galilee,—the Mount Tabor whose summit my childish mind could never reach; for it seemed to pierce the blue depths of heaven, and lose itself among the stars of night. Mount Tabor is but a thousand feet in height, and for the injustice which it does my fancy I turn from it in silence,—turn from it to find more winding ways, and stony hills that fit in together like cog-wheels; more villages of low-walled houses, the walls plastered with clay, and again plastered with cakes of camel's dung drying in the sun for fuel. There are thread-like streams, olive groves, wayside fountains, wandering flocks wherein the sheep and the goats mingle freely

—and—  
thus we  
come to  
that lovely  
lake, the “blue  
Galilee” of the  
bard.

It is blue, as usual. It mirrors the smile of a perpetual summer, and invites you to a bath, which is all that it promises to be, and more too. After a day's ride, when the Bible lands are about gone over, and the eye begins to turn from more sacred scenes to the famed gardens of Damascus, we pause a while upon the borders of the little inland sea, and heave a sigh of relief.

Can you wonder at it?—it is so hard to rebuild cities that have gone back to the dust; it is so weary a work to come late in the day to the site of what has been, and discover not even a stone upon a stone; it is so disheartening to creep, fagged, hungry, and lame, to the temple of your idol—the idol you have worshiped in secret all your life—only to find that temple a miserable ruin, and your idol taken away!

NAZARETH.

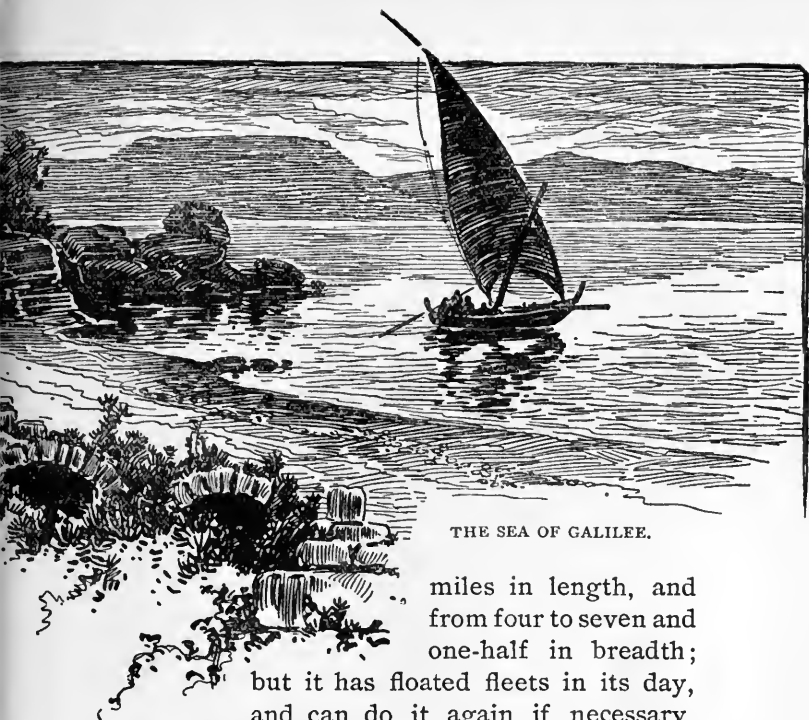


You are doing this continually in the Holy Land, and in the course of time you get used to doing it, and expect to do it again and again; but, for all that, it is none the less bitterly disappointing. Therefore, when I came to the Sea of Galilee, where the golden house of Herod once stood, steeped to the eaves thereof in voluptuous vice, I learned that the fleas were so many and so manly, a proverb has gone abroad to the effect that the king of fleas lives at Tiberias.

This is the very first impression one receives as he sits down by the shore of the sea to collect his thoughts a little, and to muse over the past. But the mood passes; the hills sleep in the afternoon sunshine; a lazy sail drifts in the middle distance—one of the clumsy crafts in which the fishermen venture when the air is dead, and the water perfectly level.

They draw no miraculous draughts nowadays, those Galileans; and when the gale plunges headlong into this deep valley—we are six hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean—and ploughs up the holy sea ruthlessly, there is no voice to still it. Alas! even if there were, ninety-nine hundredths of those who chanced to hear it, and behold the sea crouching at the sound of it, would consider it a very happy coincidence.

Blue Galilee is but sixteen and one-half



THE SEA OF GALILEE.

miles in length, and from four to seven and one-half in breadth; but it has floated fleets in its day, and can do it again if necessary.

The primal flush of its glory has faded; its proud city is no more; the gardens, groves, terraces, and gilded domes live only in a memory almost as old as the hills. Coming to Galilee one evening, and gathering myself together in a secluded spot, where the spirit of the hour might bring to life whatever is best in me, or in any man, I struck a light, drew lazy clouds of smoke from my cigar, and watched them as they floated away like fairy islands in that other undiscovered sea—the sky.

It was a still hour, and a soothing scene; yet I could not think on Him or His disciples, nor on the golden age of heathenism that once rioted right royally beside these blighted shores; and later, when the moon rose, gilding the rippling waters, and starlight and shadows and the balmy breath of Spring were thrilling me with a kind of sensuous joy, vainly and long I watched and waited—vainly and long beside the silent sea, for the unimaginable vision that shall visit me only

By the dear might of Him who walked the wave.

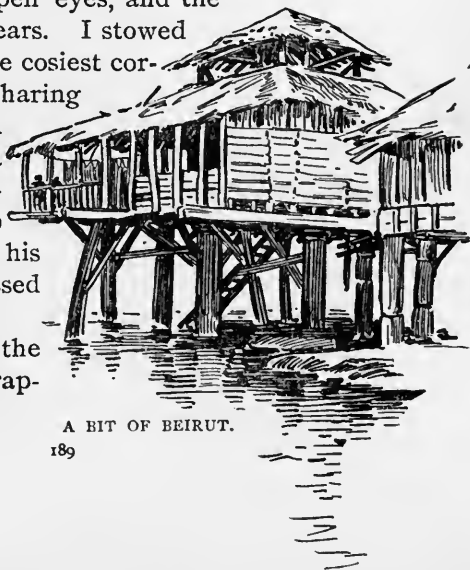
## VI.

### DAMASCUS, "PEARL OF THE EAST."

Now we are up and away for a tour over the Lebanon. Beirut, that had at first disappointed me, grew more and more lovely as our diligence slowly ascended the green hills to the east of the town. The *cafés* were crowded with loungers, and the suburbs were crowded with *cafés*. Very gay was the long road winding over the Lebanon, where groups of pleasure seekers continually nodded to one another in the rich glow of the sunset.

M——, my comrade, in whom I put all my trust, sat up in the *coupé* close to the driver, with very wide-open eyes, and the keenest possible ears. I stowed myself away in the cosiest corner of the cabin, sharing the well-worn cushions with a proud-lipped Mohammedan, who was returning to his beloved and blessed Damascus.

The darkness of the night deepened rap-



A BIT OF BEIRUT.

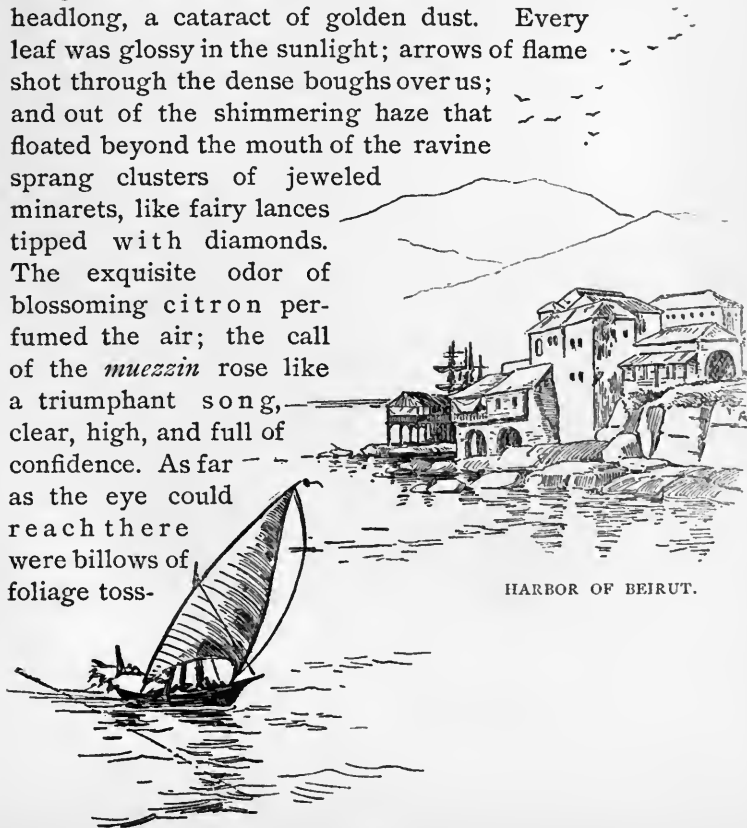
idly; long before we had gained the summit of the Lebanon pass the lights of many a village glowed softly in the thick shadows of the valleys far below us. We climbed two thousand feet into the air, all the while casting our eyes back upon the lurid sea in the west, where the young moon trembled for a moment and sank into the waves. The lamps were hung out upon our high box; the horses, three abreast, were changed every hour. We bowled on at a lively pace over one of the finest of turnpikes—the product of French enterprise—and for most of the way we had it all to ourselves. We dozed between times, but woke at the frequent stables, where there was over-much chattering, smoking, coffee-drinking, and unnecessary delay.

On the crest of the mountain a bitter cold wind blew right into our faces; I wonder that the outside passengers did not freeze. M—— was on guard all night, and kept rousing the driver, who would have slept like a child but for his passengers' impatience. After a season, through which we seemed to have been dragged by the eyelashes, the tardy dawn began to tint the hill-tops. We counted the stations on our fingers, hoping that each ridge we climbed might be our last—as, of course, one of them ultimately proved to be, and just at sunrise we plunged into a glorious green



grove. This famous wood reaches to the foot of the desolate, sun-parched mountains, and penetrates the ravines to the depth of a mile or more.

Down one of the leafy gorges we hastened. There was a sound of gushing waters on every side; they flowed beneath us in swift, dancing currents; they were heard above our heads, rushing through aqueducts built into the steep walls of the ravine; again and again the brimming tide overleaped the airy channels and fell headlong, a cataract of golden dust. Every leaf was glossy in the sunlight; arrows of flame shot through the dense boughs over us; and out of the shimmering haze that floated beyond the mouth of the ravine sprang clusters of jeweled minarets, like fairy lances tipped with diamonds. The exquisite odor of blossoming citron perfumed the air; the call of the *muezzin* rose like a triumphant song, clear, high, and full of confidence. As far as the eye could reach there were billows of foliage toss-

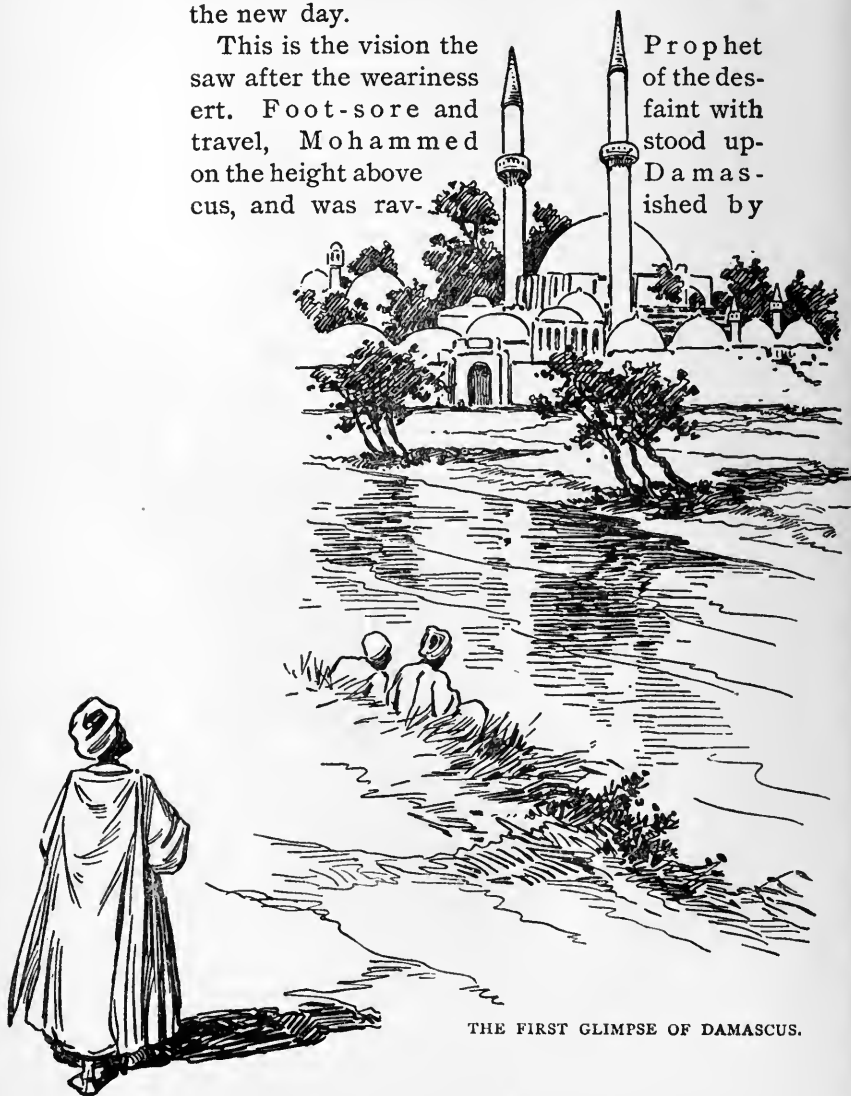


HARBOR OF BEIRUT.

ing and sparkling in the resplendent light of the new day.

This is the vision the saw after the weariness ert. Foot-sore and travel, Mohammed on the height above cus, and was rav-

Prophet of the des- faint with stood up- Damas- ished by



THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF DAMASCUS.

the beauty he beheld. Then he said: "But one paradise is allowed to man; I will not enter mine in this world," and so saying he turned back into the wilderness, and pitched his tent there. I am inclined to think that the Prophet was right, for he doubtless delighted his soul ever after with the memory of that vision; had he entered the city, much of its seeming loveliness would have vanished like the mirage.

No sooner had we come to the city walls, and been welcomed by an indolent company of Damascenes, than one of these laid hands upon us, and bore us straight away to Dimitri's Hospice. Dimitri, a portly Greek, and likewise a monopolist in the landlord line, received us at the needle's eye of his ancient and stately house. It was as yet too early for the great gates to be swung open, giving free access to the fountained and columned court, so a hinged panel in one of the gates was unlocked for us; we stepped high and bowed low, and thus passed through the eye of the needle—than which it were easier for a camel to follow our lead than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

The kingdom of Dimitri's paradise is four-sided and two-storied. The quadrangle is all a glare of white marble, often enough glistening with the spray of overflowing fountains. The citron, the orange, and the lemon seek to veil

somewhat the dazzling court, but the golden globes that cluster thickly in the fine dark shadows of the leaves are themselves but so many balls of fire. Dimitri's was originally the palace of a wealthy Damascene, and it is not a bad specimen of native architecture.

The reception-room, with a single door, is divided in three—that is, to right and left are floors raised a couple of feet above the central third portion, and these are approached by steps; the middle third is level with the court from which it is entered, and is richly tiled, and ornamented with a sparkling fountain; splendid and very lofty ceilings give dignity to an apartment that is but scantily furnished. Persian rugs are strewn about carelessly and profusely; a few chairs, ottomans, and a low divan on two sides of the room invite the weary to repose. Here the guest unwinds his nargileh, and mocks the murmurs of the fountain with long draughts at his bubbling pipe; while at a clap of the hands swarthy, turbaned servants appear noiselessly at the doorway, and are eager to proffer, on the slightest provocation, delicious sherbet, or a mouthful of the unrivaled coffee of the East in the most diminutive of cups.

The finer houses of Damascus are inhabited by Jews, and they are too often examples of shocking taste; the lavish decoration reminds

one of the ornamental plaster of which the saloon cabin of an American river-steamer is constructed; but while in the one case it is plaster and paint, in the other it is rare marble and fine gold.

One day, exploring the Jewish quarter, under the guidance of a young Hebrew of distinction, we were shown through stately courts, musical with fountains, and dusky with the shade of vines and



A CAFE IN DAMASCUS.

shrubs. Nearly always on one side of the court there is a three-walled chamber—the fourth side is open to the court—where deep divans, heaped high with cushions, beguile the languid in the heat of the day. From this alcove you enter the stately hall of the house. It is shown by the host and hostess with ingenuous eagerness; one might almost imagine that the elaborately carved and magnificently upholstered furniture were on sale, and the hosts, perhaps, looking toward a bargain. Various members of the family gather, and regard you curiously as you taste of the always proffered coffee and sweetmeats. A little conversation is attempted in Italian, but, as Arabic is the language of the people, they seldom speak any other.

In nearly every Jewish house of any magnitude there is a private synagogue, and in one of these synagogues we were shown a splendidly illuminated manuscript copy of the Old Testament, done in Bagdad five hundred years ago—an almost interminable parchment coiled upon a massive silver cylinder, and enclosed in a precious casket studded with gems.

As we wandered about these marvelous old palaces we were followed by troops of women and girls, mounted on wooden pattens twelve or fourteen inches in height. Some of these pattens were beautifully inlaid with pearl and

gold, and they are worn continually to protect the feet from the cold marble pavements and the dampness in the courts of the fountains. The faces of the women were painted so gaudily that one could hardly believe they imagined they had heightened their beauty; their dresses were showy and tasteless, and their manners so simple that they seemed to us little short of silly.

The young men were, for the most part, strikingly intelligent, handsome and agreeable. The Jewish lads are expected to marry in their eighteenth year, and consequently the thrice venerable city is filled with absurdly youthful couples, who are lodged in conspicuous palaces, in the midst of Oriental gardens, where their lives are suffered to pass like a dream, in voluptuous indolence.

It was in one of these delectable mansions of Damascus, somewhat fallen to decay, that I met the defeated lion of his tribe, Abd-el-Kader. As we entered the outer court—a very dismal one—two servants greeted us formally, and led the way to the court of the fountains. Here we were received by a slender, solemn-visaged dignitary, who extended to us the right hand of fellowship—a welcome unlooked for in the East, where a mere touch of the finger-tips is considered sufficient evidence of cordiality, even among friends.

This was El - Hadji - Abd - el - Kader - Ulid - Mahiddin, descendant of a Marabout family of the race of Hashem, who trace their pedigree to the caliphs of the lineage of Fatima. It was he who in his eighth year made a pil-

grimage to Mecca; who, with a highly - cultivated

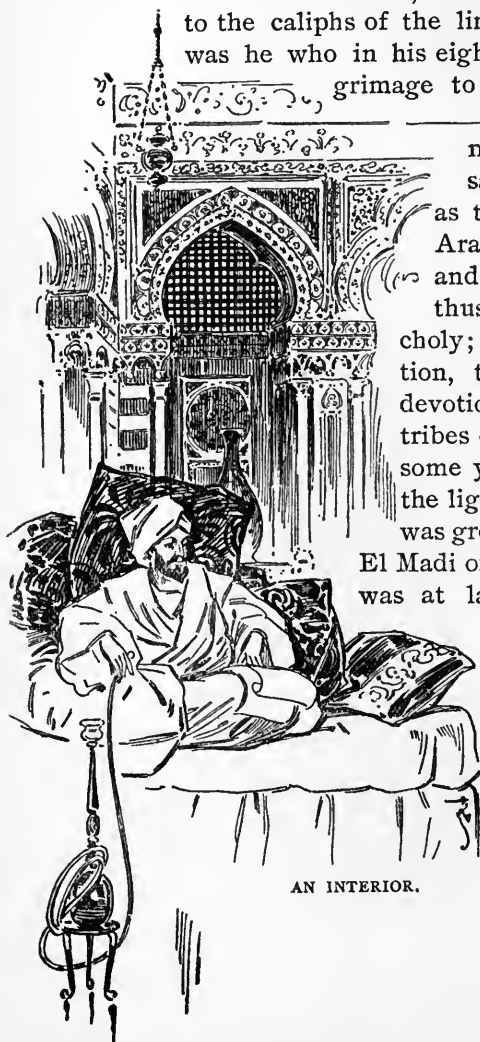
mind, was free from savage cruelty, as well

as the sensuality of the Arab; who was gentle and pure; a religious enthusiast, prone to melan-

choly; who won the affection, the admiration, the devotion of the fanatical tribes of the desert, and for some years was the life and the light of the Arabs; who was greater in his time than

El Madi of yesterday, but who was at last taken captive by

the French, held a prisoner in France, yet ultimately permitted to retire to Damascus, where his career was brought to a quiet close among the



AN INTERIOR.



wise men of the East, who paid him homage so long as he dwelt in their midst.

It was a deposed Emir who gave us welcome; a devout student of the Persian Poets; the author of a religious work, a translation of which was published in Paris (1858) under the title, "*Rappel à l' Intelligent: Avis à l' Indifferent.*" He waved us forward; crossing the court, littered with leaves and having a forlorn and unkept look, we passed into the reception-room. It showed traces of former splendor; a fountain, the basin inlaid with marble and mother-of-pearl, played in the centre of the room; the floor was a rich mosaic; the walls of marble, with panels of mother-of-pearl; the ceiling set thick with mirrors of various sizes and shapes; niches in the wall were all gilded, and all empty save one, where stood a slender vase, holding a large damask rose in full bloom. The furniture, placed in a row against the wall, was modern, conventional in pattern, and covered with blue chintz.

Here we seated ourselves with the interpreter. The Emir looked curiously at us. His was a very serious face; his beard, dyed raven-black, was worn in the prevailing mode—pointed and rather long; his hands were well formed, his finger nails neatly trimmed, and stained with henna; his bare feet were thrust into the loose, yellow overshoes, such as are

put off at the mosque door. He was clad in a lemon-colored sack, with the customary narrow brown stripe, which fell to his ankles; over this was a loose blue outer robe, lined with light blue silk, and having an inner sleeve of purple. A large, white turban, embroidered with threads of pale gold, encircled his scarlet tarboosh.

The visit was evidently a bore to him—how could it have been otherwise? Yet he endured it with Oriental resignation. He played with a soft white handkerchief embroidered in colors, drawing it through his fingers over and over again; he made a round fluffy ball of it; spread it out carefully upon his knees, and then caught it up, blew his nose loudly, and spat into it; he cracked his knuckles, inquired what part of the world we were from, and seemed informed upon the affairs of the several governments. But his reign was over; like the caged eagle, he affected an indifference which, perhaps, he was far from feeling.

Orange water thickened with snow was served soon after our arrival, and a tiny cup of coffee on our departure; but the host apologized for the non-appearance of the customary pipe. It was a day of abstinence; for thirty days of the Mohammedan fast he remained in a small chamber, in utter solitude, drinking little, eating less, and smoking not at all. It was by

the greatest favor that we saw him at all, and I was more than delighted when, at my request, he sent a dumb attendant for his inkhorn, and, while he held a slip of paper upon the palm of his left hand, he took a delicate brush, and, with the freedom and grace of an artist, wrote an autograph in arabesque, the very sight of which is a joy to the eye. He shook hands thrice at parting, following us to the outer gates, where six serv-



THE STREET CALLED STRAIT.

ants bowed us a formal farewell, and proceeded to conduct their venerable and venerated master, tottering beyond his three-score-and-ten, back into the privacy of his prophet-chamber.

As we rode one afternoon through the gardens of the city, in a lovely path that picked its way among the rushing streams, a solemn horseman approached us. The apparition was at first startling; for the rider, clad in a long cloak of white merino that veiled him from head to foot, seemed an image of death, albeit his steed was superbly caparisoned, and his face—as much of it as was visible—was the type of Oriental youth: proud, placid, sensuous. He was followed at a little distance by a train of venerable men, each one mounted like a prince in a fairy tale, and all grave and grizzled. The singular procession passed slowly onward, under the trees, at sunset, toward the city gates; and we learned, as the caravan silently disappeared in the greenwood, like a ghostly company in a story of enchantment, that he who led the band was the son of Abd-el-Kader, and that his followers were the sages and philosophers of Damascus, who had been passing the day with him at his summer palace in the wood.

Only such picturesque riders as these were worthy to possess those romantic bridle-paths;

and, somehow, as I rode down the narrow and winding ways that are forever losing themselves among the meadows that girdle the city, listening always to the gurgle of gushing waters, pausing sometimes beside full-throated fountains, or under boughs where the sun spins his web of gold; standing knee-deep in wild, rich grass, or buried up to my eyes in fragrant and flowering jungles, I had always in mind, as the most fitting thought in this garden of glories—indeed the garden became a kind of illuminated edition of the text—some perfect page of “Eothen.”

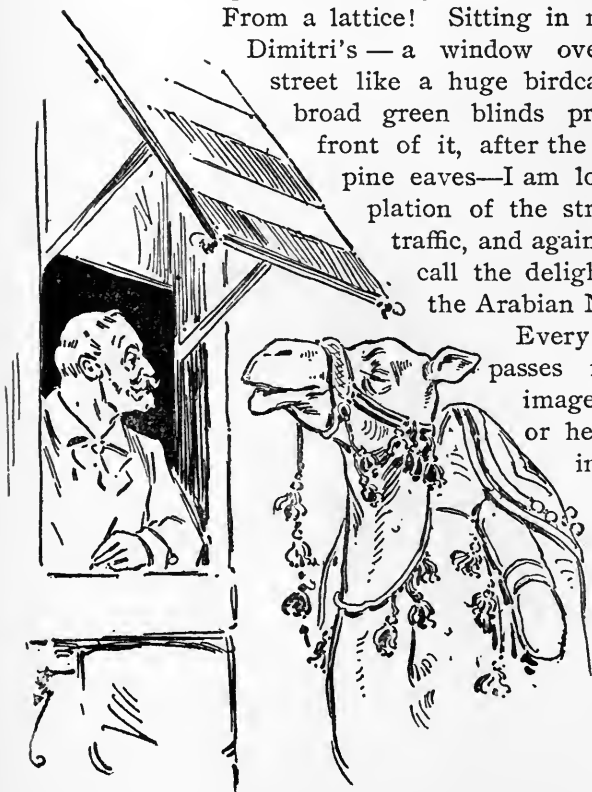
After more than thirty years of active service, during which time Messrs. Tom, Dick, and Harry, the reverent and the irreverent, male and female, wise and otherwise, have had their say in print or out of it—and I among the number,—“Eothen” is still the one royal and unrivaled volume of the East. Poet and prophet, the author of “Eothen” is to-day as fresh, as fair, as faultless as at the hour when, radiant with the classic glow of the University, young Kinglake astonished and delighted the world with his revelation; for he seemed to have plucked out the heart of the mysterious East, and for the first time to have laid it bare to the eye of the unbeliever.

I know not what magic lay in his pen, or if the necromancy of the East conferred upon his

work a life immortal; but I do know from personal experience that, with my pocket copy of "Eothen" (*Tauchnitz* edition, to be had at any shop in Islamdom), with my unbound book—a mere bundle of loose leaves—in my hand, and my finger upon the very line, I have again and again tested its marvelous truthfulness to nature and to art; and you who know the volume need not be reminded of its perennial beauty.

From a lattice! Sitting in my window at Dimitri's—a window overhanging the street like a huge birdcage, and with broad green blinds propped out in front of it, after the fashion of Alpine eaves—I am lost in contemplation of the street travel and traffic, and again and again recall the delightful pages of the *Arabian Nights*.

Every figure that passes is the living image of some hero or heroine in those immortal tales:—the fine animals, thoroughly bred Arabian, indeed worthy



to be called steeds; the gorgeous trappings, crusted with embroideries done in gold or silver thread, that cover the high-stepping mares, and trail their rich fringes nearly to the ground; the shapeless bundles of bright-colored silks and satins, with a woman at the core of them,—a woman whose dark eyes dart a scornful glance at the Christian, as she jogs by on her diminutive donkey; the troops of donkeys, with their bare-legged boy-master cudgeling them bravely, as they hang upon the flying heels in breathless pursuit; the camels, that eye me contemptuously as they stalk by, with their humps as high as my first-floor window, their flabby lips pursing within reach of my hand, and their clumsy burdens fairly brushing my sleeve as I lean from the lattice at Dimitri's.

Is it not like an Arabian tale? The little hunchback, the porter, the royal calendars, and the ladies of Bagdad; the barber and his six brothers, the sleeper awakened, the poor blind man, the slave of love, the enchanted horse—yea, even the forty thieves—all, all are here visible to the naked eye, and making that wondrous book of Eastern romance seem



like a reality. Who knows but somewhere in the bewildering throng beneath my window the young King of the Black Isles may be masquerading? Or that the beautiful one who just passed was a Princess of Cathay? Perhaps the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid may not be far distant. You will remember his love of adventure; and are not all those fairy-people of Arabia immortal?



From my window, looking up a street directly in front of me, and down another street which crosses it at right angles—the street our hospice borders on,—and looking only about fifty paces in each direction, I have counted twenty-seven dogs lying asleep in the middle of the day, and likewise the middle of the way. These are the pariah dogs of the Orient, and I believe there are more of them in Damascus than in any other city of the East. Camels and horses step over them; donkeys turn out for them; men ignore them; children kick them, beat them with sticks, and throw missiles at them; but the poor curs only raise their heads, give a yelp of pain, and drop off to sleep again.

It must be borne in mind that there are no pavements in Oriental cities; that man and beast share the middle of the street, and that



the pedestrian is in constant danger of being run down by some animal or vehicle. Yet these dogs sleep calmly in the very midst of the thoroughfare; and they sleep most of the day—no wonder: they sit up all night to bark.

Of the numberless canines that came under my notice in the Orient, I do not remember having seen one without blemish; they are bald in spots, weak-jointed, blear-eyed, mangy, miserable creatures. No one owns them, no one cares for them; they live upon the offal that is heaped in the streets after dark, and each must fight for his share of it. Every dog has his district as well as his day; he may travel up and down certain streets and lanes, known well enough to himself and his enemies; he may toe the borderline of his beat, and make mouths at the dogs over the way; he may say as many saucy and wicked things as he chooses, so long as he remains on his own ground; but let him venture a yard beyond it, and a score of vengeful canines will fall upon him, and rend him limb from limb.

I have seen a sickly and feverish cur steal noiselessly into the enemy's camp, to slake his thirst at a neighboring fountain. While



the poor wretch was drinking—I wonder how he could swallow with his tail curled down so tightly!—while he lapped greedily and fearfully, his presence was discovered, and he was at once surrounded. A hop-skip-and-jump would have brought him to his native heath, and then it would have been his turn to

bark; but he was seized at once by a dozen cowardly brutes, that dragged him hither and thither, and would have devoured him alive,

but that his piercing cries and the general hubbub brought down his tribe to the rescue.

He was saved, poor fellow, and limped home in the pitch of battle, unobserved by the infuriated enemy; but his ears were torn to shreds, and he was so full of holes that had he fallen

into the fountain which brought him so little refreshment, he would have filled and sunk inside of ten seconds.

It is not safe to venture forth after dark without one of the long paper lanterns, which every one carries—looking like an illuminated concertina standing on end—to light your steps. Indeed, there is a law compelling all



pedestrians to keep their lamps trimmed and burning; hence, also, the Scriptural figure: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

A story is told of a foolish virgin, or a tramp, possibly, who ventured forth alone in the dark streets without his lantern; his stumbling steps were heard, the alarm was sounded, and in three minutes he was ten feet deep in dogs. When the day broke, and the row was over, there was nothing left to tell the tale but a pair of indigestible boots.

The cry of these outcasts is terrific, but it is incessant; and therefore in the course of time the ear becomes accustomed to the horrible discord, and it is scarcely noticed.

Can you not see the contempt concentrated in the favorite Mohammedan epithet, too often hurled at our devoted heads, "Dog of a Christian"?

The bazaars of Damascus are extolled above those of Cairo and Constantinople; but the bazaar in itself, let it be where it may, so long as it is sheltered from the glare of the sun, and sweet-



PARIAH.

ened with the perfumes of Arabia, is far too charming a resort ever to lose much by comparison.

The Damascus streets, narrow and ill-paved

—the receptacles of every species of domestic filth—are often covered with steep roofs of loosely laid boards or dried palm boughs, through which the strong sunlight sifts its powdered gold. In this semi-obscurity, jostled continually by the streaming crowd that surges to and fro, all the senses are steeped in the fullness of that luxurious Eastern life, which in Damascus alone seems as yet to have suffered no noticeable decay.

It was in Damascus, the largest city of Syria, containing 110,000 souls, of whom 90,000 are Moham-medans, that the latter fell upon the Christians in 1866, and slew them in the streets, in their own



houses, and even on the very steps of the altar, whither they had fled for safety. For days the streets ran blood; the bodies of 6,000 Christian citizens were left where they fell. The dogs fed on them; the birds came in from the desert to join the feast. The persecuted Christians were unable to bury their dead; for no sooner had the living stolen from their hiding-places than they were slaughtered by the bloodthirsty and unrelenting Mussulmans.

It is due to the memory of Abd-el-Kader to say here that all his influence was exerted in behalf of the Christians, and that he was ever most charitably disposed; but the massacre was not checked until 15,000 Christians had fallen a prey to Mohammedan fanaticism.

You are apt to think of this as you lounge in the bazaars of Damascus, and hear from time to time some bitter imprecation hissed at you under the breath; and, yet, so bewildering is the spectacle that surrounds you, that fear is lost in admiration, and you venture onward, filled with childlike wonderment. You enter the saddle-market, where there are heaps of huge pillows, gold embroidered and with fringes a foot deep. These are Oriental saddles, and they make a very broad, very flat, and very comfortable seat atop of the wee Egyptian donkeys. There are straps, girths, bridles, sharp Arabian bits, clumsy stirrups

that hide the whole foot, holsters, and gew-gaws without end, all glittering and jingling—such dazzling paraphernalia as is the pride of the circus ring-master, and the delight of the applauding populace; yet these are for the daily use of the picturesque Damascenes.

Farther on, the copper-smiths beat noisily at their anvils, and display huge platters that might almost hold a barbecued ox. The bazaar of the second-hand clothier is called *Luk-el-Kumeleh*—literally the louse-market. There is something startling in the naked truths that occasionally surprise the tongues of these Levantine euphemists. The Greek Bazaar is more general; in it one sees almost anything from food and raiment to the far-famed Damascus blades; but the latter article has lost both its edge and its temper in these degenerate days.

Afterward, elbow to elbow, a double line of booths stretches away into the shadowy distance, where the twilight of the place dims the brilliant costumes of the loungers. It is the bazaar of the pipe-sellers. Here there are pipes of cocoanut shells and ostrich eggs mounted in gold and silver, and having stems a fathom long, with immense globes of amber for mouth-pieces. Then there are the drapers with fabrics rainbow dyed; camel's-hair cloaks—web-like tissues with gossamer blossoms

floating through them as lightly as the down of the dandelion. And the booksellers, with their precious tomes filled with ancient and Eastern lore; lyrics of Persian poets, engrossed on dainty rolls of ivory-smooth parchment, tied with a thread of gold; and there are sealed volumes of magic and mystery. It is said



THE BAZAAR.

that these proud booksellers sometimes refuse the money of a Christian customer.

In the silk bazaar one sees embroideries from the Lebanon; dainty pouches for the curled shavings of the fragrant tobacco; slippers, millions and millions of them—a whole parish filled with nothing but scarlet and lemon-colored slippers. Then there are draperies from Bagdad, flowered cottons from Birmingham, filmy veils from Switzerland, embroidered window-hangings and table-covers from the south of France, and fezes—such as every one wears in the Orient,—all made in the factories of Vienna. Perhaps it is not generally known that many of the so-called Oriental fabrics are manufactured in Europe and shipped to the bazaars of Cairo, Damascus, and Stamboul. Genuine Oriental wares, of all descriptions, are growing scarcer every year.

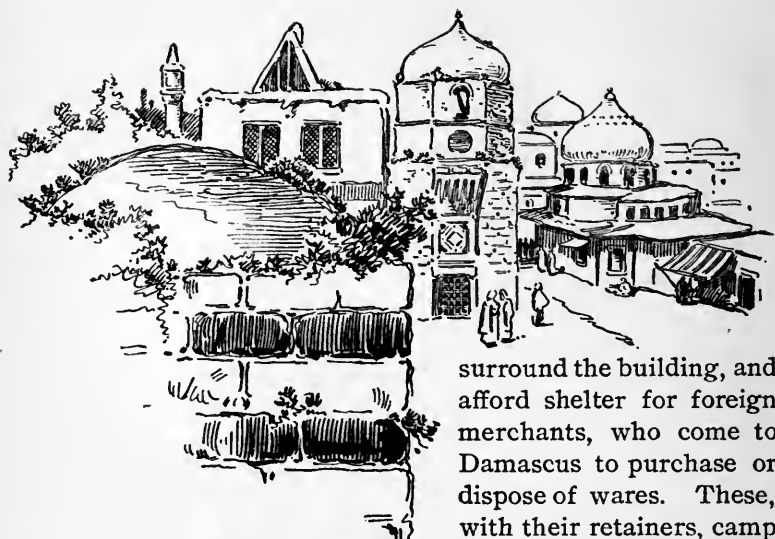
At the baker-shops and the little *cafés* that are sprinkled through the bazaars one sees the thin cakes of flour pasted against the sloping sides of small, portable ovens, ready to be eaten hot at all hours. The baker's boy cries: *Ya rezzak!*—"O giver of sustenance!" A sweetish loaf, sopped in grape sirup, and sprinkled with sesame, is offered for sale, with the cry: "Food for swallows!" Young maidens are specially fond of this dish. When water-cresses are sold, the vender shouts:



"Tender cresses from the spring of Ed-Deriyeh. If an old woman eats them she is young again next morning." And the lad who hawks bouquets sings out significantly: "O young husband, appease your mother-in-law!"

The bazaar of the joiners is noisy with the saw, the file, and the hammer. Here the workers in perfumed wood, and those who inlay mother-of-pearl, make the high, stilt-like pattens, the small tables, the mirror-frames, and the clumsy but ornamental furniture which the Damascenes delight in. The goldsmiths beat their gold into rude armlets, and make the tiny and delicate filagree stands for the fragile coffee-cups we are continually handling.

The great Khan of Asad Pasha is forever associated with the bazaars of Damascus, and is just the spot to rest in after one has exhausted himself with sight-seeing. It is by far the most interesting of all the khans; is built of black and yellow stone, the alternate layers striping the walls to the top. Imagine a very large and very lofty hall, square, with four tall columns in the centre supporting a dome; the central dome surrounded by eight others of equal size, and all of them perforated with starlike windows, through which the sunlight slants its dusty rays. There is a fountain between the central columns. Two galleries



surround the building, and afford shelter for foreign merchants, who come to Damascus to purchase or dispose of wares. These, with their retainers, camp along the walls in the galleries, and, having turned their camels and asses loose about the fountain, gather their legs under them among the cushions of the divans, and smoke or chat or pray, or listen to the wandering minstrels and story-tellers, who often stray into the khan to charm the merchants with their *romanzas* and romances. I observed that all business was usually suspended until the climax of the tale was reached, or the singer had sung out his song.

There is a kind of magnetism in the stuffs heaped about in broken bales, that is sure to drain your pocket sooner or later. I wonder if old Abou Antika, who throws wide his

doors, stirs his snow-chilled sherbet, and lays fire to his best pipes when the distinguished foreigner is announced—I wonder if he has no compunctions of conscience when he closes a bargain, and knows that he has defrauded his customer thrice over?

In Abou's bazaar you recline upon Persian rugs of downy and silken softness, while about you are heaped the spoils of empires—not the sort of empires that poke one another in the ribs with wordy documents, and divert one another with the exchange of pompous telegrams; but the empires that sleep the sleep of the lotos-eaters, and dream dreams of an earthly paradise, until they awaken from this peaceful dream to war; then, like a tempest-tossed sea, they overflow their borders, carrying death and destruction with them. Something of the wreck that follows has been gathered and stored in this treasure-house—a splendid and barbaric confusion of jewel-hilted weapons, and of all the shapely or shapeless bric-a-brac that for centuries have been in the jealous keeping of pagan hands. How a man's heart leaps at the first sight of these covetable keepsakes, lying like rubbish heaps about the bazaar of this miserly Mussulman; how his portemonnaie shrivels up beneath the simoon breath of the final and fatal bargain! Abou Antika is a temptation and a snare. Away

with such a fellow as he! *Mashallah*—I have said it!

If we may believe Josephus, then Damascus was founded by Uz, the son of Aram and grandson of Shem. Abraham's steward was a native of the place, as is recorded in the Book of Genesis. Nothing more is known of Damascus, until the time of David, when "the Syrians of Damascus came to succor Hada-dezer, King of Zobah," with whom David was at war. On this occasion "David slew of the Syrians 22,000 men," and in consequence of his victory became complete master of the territory, which he garrisoned with Israelites. From that time through several centuries, the city was taken and retaken at intervals, fortune alternately favoring the Syrians, the Israelites, or Judeans.

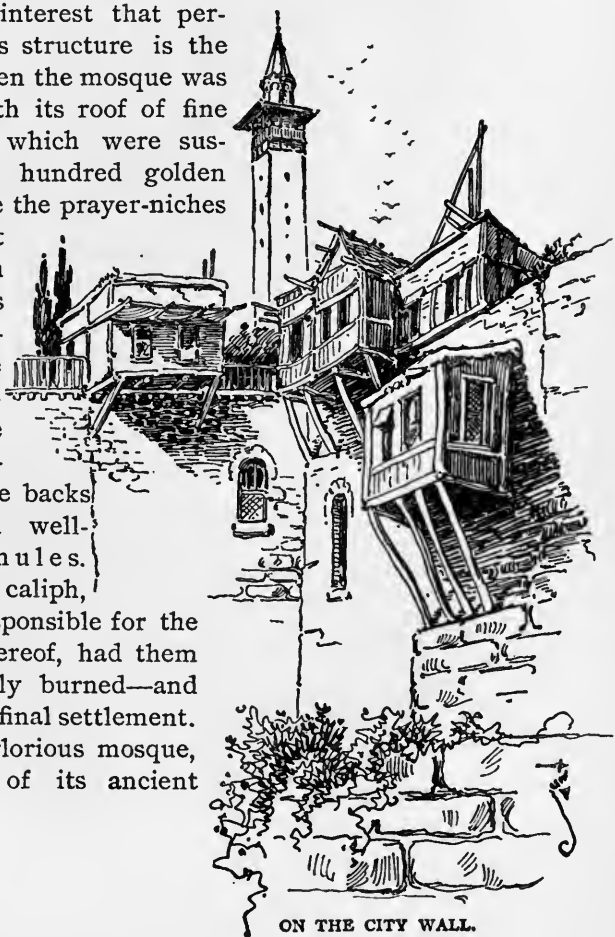
Damascus has ever been a great centre of trade. Strabo says it was the most famous place in Syria during the Persian period. Its Gospel history, though not so full as is that of the Old Testament, is yet of deep interest to Christian readers. One is still shown the window in the wall from which St. Paul was let down in a basket, and the site of his miraculous conversion,—though this is a disputed point. Then there is the house of Naaman the Syrian, where there are a few indifferent lepers; and the house

of Ananias; and the street which was "called Strait."

The great mosque should not be forgotten, though a sight of it is hardly worth the handful of francs and the trouble it takes to see it.

The chief interest that pertains to this structure is the fact that when the mosque was finished, with its roof of fine gold, from which were suspended six hundred golden lamps, while the prayer-niches

were set thick with priceless gems, the accounts of the various artificers were duly presented on the backs of eighteen well-burdened mules. Then the caliph, who was responsible for the payment thereof, had them all religiously burned—and that was his final settlement. As for the glorious mosque, few traces of its ancient



ON THE CITY WALL.

splendor are now visible; in brief, it is a disappointment; but one finds consolation in the *cafés* of Damascus, and healing and balm for all wounds. Let us adjourn thither.

We dined at sunset in a Damascus garden. The first call to prayer rang out from a neighboring minaret between soup and fish. We knew the voice of that particular *muezzin*. Five times every four and twenty hours he climbed into his high gallery, and chanted the "*Adán*" like a lark. Poor fellow! In common with the majority of his singular and exclusive tribe, he was stone-blind. With much worldly wisdom, blind men are usually appointed to the semi-sacred office; because from the gallery of the minaret one looks over the housetops and into the jealous court of many a harem; and with willful eyes the *muezzin* might direct his prayer at the wrong angle in search of paradise.

As we were already at the table, we could not lift up our hearts until the meal was over; no Moslem ever is expected to; though at that moment the shrill, sweet voice soared in the air, crying: "God is most great; I testify that there is no deity but God; I testify that Mohammed is God's apostle. Come to prayer; come to security. God is most great; there is no deity but God!"

We finished dining, and repaired to the court

of the hotel, where a half-dozen merchants were inviting custom, with their wares temptingly displayed upon rich rugs. A snake-charmer offered to divert us with a sack full of reptiles; a wandering poet, with his lute, volunteered a song; swallows swung to and fro between the eaves of the court; the fountain plashed monotonously. It occurred to us that the amusements of Damascenes were lacking in variety. One gets tired of looking at rude armlets of beaten silver and disks of yellow gold embossed with verses from the Koran. The snake-charmers are, for the most part, tiresome and tricky; the magicians, clever but avaricious; the poets, pleasant enough—one sees them in nearly every *café*—which reminded us that the evening might be passed in one of the *cafés* for which Damascus is famous.

Once more the *muezzin* poured out his voice upon the air. The twilight had fallen; the afterglow had dissolved into the deep blue that was gathering about us, with the great stars scattered through it. This was the second call to prayer—a repetition of the first just after sunset. I could think of nothing as I listened to the pathetic cry but of those caged quails in Capri, whose eyes are put out that they may pipe the more pathetically, and with wistful notes entrap their fellows hastening over the Tyrian waves to Africa.

The poet promised to conduct us to the Café of the Thousand Islands. The snake-charmer withdrew; the merchants shut up shop on the instant. With long paper lanterns we groped through the ill-kept streets; droves of *pariah* dogs snapped at our heels, but the lanterns were our salvation. From one of the darkest of the streets we entered a dingy hall. It was not inviting; it contained a few very cheap and not over-clean tables, a few chairs, a few lanterns—too few,—a few indolent guests, who seemed to have lost all interest in life. We hesitated at the forbidding threshold. The poet begged us to enter, hinting that as death is the only gate to the seventh heaven, it was possible that we were even then upon the thorny borders of the gardens of delight. We entered. There was a sound of rushing waters. The air was cooled with spray. Above the murmur of the waters we heard music and low laughter, though laughter is uncommon with those people. We heard the twang of the seven-stringed *'ood*, the wail of the *rahah*, the singer's viol with its two cords, the trill of the double-stemmed *arghool*, the clang of the *sagat*, the jingle of the *tar*, the throb of the *darábukkeh*.

We passed out of the hall into a parterre bordered with date-palms. Drifts of snowy jasmine whitened the winding paths. Beyond



us was a grove of date-palms and mimosas, whose boughs were filled with lanterns. The music ceased for a moment; there was no sound but the babble of innumerable streams, the plash of innumerable fountains, and the gurgle of rose-water bubbling in the tanks of the nargilehs.

"Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" asked Naaman of old. Here the rivers are broken into ten thousand rivulets, that wind in and out among grassy islands, making music for evermore.

Rustic bridges spring from one shore to another. You may make the tour of the Thousand Islands dry-shod. You may wander from bower to bower, under illuminated canopies, and find at last the seclusion of some *kiosk*, where pipe-bearers attend you, and youthful slaves lift to your lips the fragile sherbet-cups, and minstrels and dancers await your bidding.

Our cups were drained; our pipes were filled; we rioted at the feast of lanterns. Again epicurean music filled the night; we were reclining on deep divans. On either hand *kursees* (small tables inlaid with pearl, tortoise-shell, and ivory) were placed within our reach. The coffee steamed upon them. An attendant approached, and planted a flaming *mesh'al* near

us—a cresset filled with burning wood, that gave forth a delicious odor. A lurid glow flooded the pavilion.

Did we dream, or was it a *houri* that dazzled us with a tiara of jingling coins, and with rows of coins upon the breast, and chains upon the arms, and girdles upon the hips? A loose garment flowed from the throat to the feet, confined only by these glittering coins—a fortune in themselves. The white lace mask of the Circassian beauty hid the lower half of the *gházeeyeh's* face. The uncovered eyes blazed from their dark rims of kohl. Between her fingers she clasped the bronze *sagat*. Small silver bells tinkled upon her anklets, and from a necklace was suspended a gilded *kurs*, that hung like a breastplate upon her bosom.

When she danced the minstrels played more glibly. Every motion of her body inflamed their hearts. It was not a dance as we know it—it was the writhing of a captive serpent, whose rising gorge sends the blood plunging through the veins, swells every muscle in the body, and makes the flesh quiver and creep perceptibly. Not all the *Ghawáze* of the East might furnish a rival to this little creature; and when at last she leaped like flame, and fanned the air, the minstrels shrieked with joy, and threw down their instruments in the

moment when she sank to the earth in rapturous exhaustion.

We were silent a moment; the waters still played on every hand; the lanterns were burning low. Here was a Peri in a terrestrial paradise; an Odalisque escaped from the harem of the Sultan. Soon the poet led us away into the dark lanes of the city, toward Dimitri's hospital house.

The late moon was just rising and flooding the east with silver—or was it daybreak? From a minaret came the third call to prayer—it *was* daybreak.

Anon, when it was all over, with the Café of the Thousand Islands, and the feast of lanterns, and the rioting waters, and the odors that made a rose garden of the place, such as would have gladdened the heart of Saadi or Hafiz,—when even the poet had departed, and the city was still as death,—lo! from among the stars fell that marvelous voice, "God is most great; come to prayer; come to security. Prayer is better than sleep!" But we slept.

## VII.

### FROM BAALBEK TO BEIRUT.

Half-way between Damascus and Beirut is Shtora, a hospice where the traveler eats poorly and sleeps not at all, but he may pay as good a bill here as in any port under the Eastern sun. At Shtora you turn suddenly and decisively to the right, pass through a broad, green valley between two ranges of snow-capped mountains, and ride for seven hours. In the tail end of the seventh hour, along with the sunset, you fall upon the flanks of a steppe where stand the magnificent ruins of old Baalbek. That is what we did, M—— and I, in company with a dragoman, who was worth his weight in gold, and was inclined to speculate on his market value.

We chased a thunder-storm down that glorious valley. At first the mulberry trees sheltered us, but we rode out of them into the meadows, where flocks were feeding, and where the storm trailed its crape-like skirts of rain. Then we dashed forward in the track of the tempest. Two or three villages, Moham-medan or Maronite, detained us not a moment; for the air was so charged with electricity that

horse and rider alike longed for the wings of the wind. By and by the valley spread out before us like a prairie—a prairie turned up at the sides; and there was nothing in all the landscape to fix the eye upon and rest it for a moment.

Then the storm suddenly turned on us, and spat great, cold rain-drops in our faces, and the wind drove us back on our haunches, and we had fifteen awful minutes of struggle and suspense that brought us to the edge of a shallow ravine, where a khan was hidden, and where we sought food and shelter, and found them both at our service. There were but three walls to the khan; it was as fine as a stable, and as fragrant. We were stalled along with the beasts, and fed at the same time and by the same hands,



and with as much or as little consideration for our bodily comfort. For an hour we shivered over the embers that had been coaxed into a blaze on our arrival, and that enveloped us with clouds of thick, blue smoke. My nargileh lost its flavor, and I was glad to cover my face with the blankets that lay near me, and drop off into a deep but direful sleep. Your Syrian khan is not always the artistic retreat that sounds well in song and looks well in a picture.

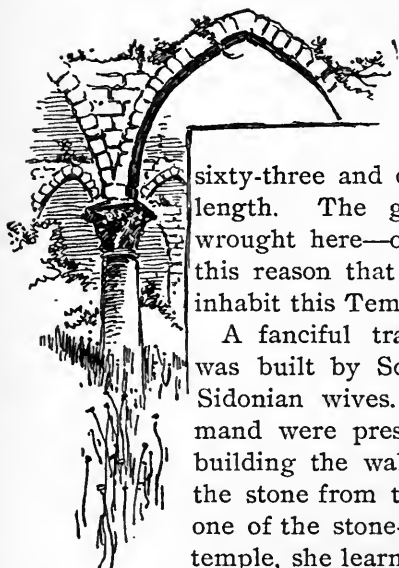
Down at the mouth of the valley, above the clouds that fall upon its breast, towered the hoary-headed Hermon, king of mountains. To the west loomed Ante-Lebanon, topped with antique cedar groves, and thickly peopled with Christians; to the east the twin range of snowy-crested peaks shut out Damascus and the desert, beyond which Palmyra sleeps her eternal sleep. All about us cattle fed upon the broad, green-carpeted steppes. The distant mountains echoed faintly the artillery of the retreating gale.

We arose, remounted, and made a brilliant charge upon the walls of Baalbek, that were soon discovered at the very top of the valley. Baalbek, a temple sacred to Baal and all the gods,—a temple four thousand feet above the sea, in the midst of a green garden at the top of the beautiful Valley of Litany;—Baalbek, the proud mother of sun-worship and moon-worship, from whose high altars curled the

smoke of the sacrifice, but where later the Apostles of the one true God set up their standard of the Cross. When it had been thrown down, in its turn, the followers of the Prophet entered into the Holy of Holies, and the voice of the *muezzin* rang out from the summit of the citadel "Come to security! Come to prayer!" But the prayers were said out at last, and the Turks made a fortress of one of the world's wonders. Whatever loveliness was left in the once wonderful temple, these bearded barbarians stamped out with the heel of scorn.

From the most distant times Baalbek was the chief seat of sun-worship, and was for a time known as Heliopolis. Its temple contained a golden statue of Apollo, which on certain annual festivals was borne about upon the shoulders of the citizens. Trajan consulted its famous oracle before entering on his second Parthian campaign. Under Constantine the temple became a Christian church; but in A. D. 748 the Arabs sacked the city, and its total destruction followed in A. D. 1400. What the Arabs, Tartars, and Turks had spared was almost completely annihilated by a terrific earthquake in the year 1759. The once splendid city is now reduced to an insignificant village of a few hundred impoverished people.

The stupendous proportions of some of the foundation stones of the temple give a name



RUINS AT BAALBEK.

to the structure—Trilithon (three-stoned). These three stones, thirteen feet in height and as many in thickness, are respectively sixty-four, sixty-three and one-half, and sixty-two feet in length. The gods themselves must have wrought here—or devils; and perhaps it is for this reason that no one is permitted long to inhabit this Temple of the Sun.

A fanciful tradition records that Baalbek was built by Solomon to charm one of his Sidonian wives. The *genii* under his command were pressed into service,—the males building the walls, and the females bringing the stone from the quarry close at hand. As one of the stone-bearers was approaching the temple, she learned that her brother had been crushed to death by the fall of a portion of the walls; and in despair she dropped her burden where she stood, and no one was ever found able to remove it. The block still lies in the quarry, and measures fourteen feet in height and breadth, and sixty-eight in length.

The last change has come to Baalbek. Goats climb its tottering walls in search of the lichen that is rooted there. Cattle are pastured in the grass-grown courts; husbandmen till the soil that has accumulated in the royal chambers; and the robust cabbage, the burly beet, and



the homely but hearty artichoke thrive in the fat dust of the thrice-dead past. A wall that is apparently the work of a colossal race; a chamber rich and lovely even in its utter decay; a cluster of superb columns, the last remnant of the beauty that was once enthroned here (and these columns at the point of destruction, for one or another of the mountain gales will dash them into the dust)—such is Baalbek of to-day!

The lads of the neighboring village play quoits with fragments of marble chipped off from the statues that stand in noseless and forsaken rows; groves have sprung up about the temple, and a cold mountain stream sparkles and sings along its base. It is the most melancholy, the most mystic ruin imaginable; and at twilight, as I watched it from the brow of a neighboring hill, that cluster of slender columns stood up against the sky; and as the evening star threw an enchanting ray across them, I could not resist comparing them to shattered lute-strings. What melody they once gave forth! and now how the winds sweep the sacred chords but call forth no response! That instrument was once so cunningly touched, it moved to love or wrought to madness the passionate heart of the listener. But the soul that conceived it, and the spirit in which it was conceived, have long since per-

ished out of sight, and the flight of the gods left but the shattered strings, from which the voluptuous music has passed for evermore.

And now away to the Lebanon! After surmounting the first crest of the range, the winding trail leads us through gorges trembling with the thunder of ice-cold cataracts; through deep and wild ravines; along giddy heights, where one false step would have hurled us down to death in the abyss a thousand feet below. Numerous villages dot the mountain valleys, and some of them are nestled far up among the wintry crags of the higher range. Thousands of monasteries are planted among the rocky gorges and upon the sunny hill-sides. Most of these are the homes of Maronite monks; a few are of the Armenian Order, but the Maronites—the descendants of the early Christians — predominate throughout the Lebanon.

The Druses haunt some of the glens—the high-horned women, and the barbarous men who did some bloody work in common with the Mohammedans during the reign of terror in 1860. The Druses are ever at war, and but for the Turkish soldiers, who keep them in subjection, they would give the Christians little rest, even in Lebanon, the stronghold of Oriental Christianity.

As for the cedars, they are fine old fellows—

a dozen or so of them; and they bear up against the bitter winter with miraculous fortitude, considering the fact that they are believed to have stood at the time when their fellows were cut down and borne away in floats and by camel and drag, to roof the Temple of King Solomon at Jerusalem. It is intensely lonely on the mountain-top. The cedars called "the saints" stand apart, and shelter a small hermit chapel. A grove of some thousand trees is not far distant; but the thin air, the hiss or hush in the melancholy, drooping boughs, the winding trail that comes out of the cloud over the last summit, and disappears in the mist that enshrouds the peak before us—is it any wonder that we pressed forward at a reckless pace, and rested not until our eyes once more fell upon the hot, palm-fringed shore, and swept all the waters of the splendid sea?

Beirut! I know of nothing more beautiful, as a landscape picture, than a bird's-eye view of Beirut from the west slope of the Lebanon. The sapphire sea dotted with snowflake sails, the golden shore, the paradise of palms and pines—here they meet together and dream over that fantastical poem of Heine; the mosque domes and minarets that shine like ivory in the sombre green of the groves; the mellow peal of bells rolling up on the summer

gale, and that gale heavy with the delicious breath of orange and citron and blossoming vines—surely it is a comfort to tarry for a few last days in so sweet a land as this.

For ten days I was a prisoner in Beirut, awaiting the steamer for the North. The heat increased almost hourly; it became a burden, and at last it was only tolerable, out of doors, very early in the morning, or after twilight in the evening. Even the great pine groves that invoked the muse of Lamartine, and still charm the smokers and coffee-tasters of Beirut, failed to comfort me. The Café Chantant, down by the sea, where the Viennese girls, whom I saw at Port Said, play nightly—the shady, shabby terrace overhanging the sea—is infested by Greeks; it is the one place of public resort in Beirut, and many a time I sat there under the palm-boughs by the water's edge and watched the sun go down into the deep, and heard the gun from the flagship, and saw the bunting slide down from the peak. Then the stars came out and the moon rose, throwing a white light upon the rocks, that resembled the first fall of snow. A few bathers still strode into the waves, singing, unless the orchestra were then rendering some strain of Strauss, that must have rung sadly enough in the ears of the homesick girls who played it.

In the sunshine I have seen columns lying under the sea near one of the numerous *cafés*; columns crusted with mussels and swathed in long ribbons of sea-grass—probably remains of the baths established by Herod Agrippa, who embellished this “Berytus” with baths, theatres, and gladiatorial circuses. There are towers on the seashore built by the Crusaders. But few other traces of the past



THE CEDARS OF LEBANON.

remain, and nothing that points to the earlier history of the port.

It is a long leap from Phœnician times—the times of the Canaanitish “Gibbites”—to this year of Our Lord, when the steamer is overdue; but let us take it. It is getting too hot for me in Beirut. I bake by night and boil by day. I hear the voice of ten thousand birds in the lemon grove under my window; I hear the splash of the fountain in the marble court; I take my dinner upon the housetop at twilight, and find half the town doing the very same sort of thing. The fair Jewess in the next block nods at me over the chimney-pots, because we are always up under the stars together; the fat Turk on the roof below me gives me a profound *salaam*, which I return to the best of my ability. We are all uncommonly sociable at twilight; and no wonder; for there is a surpassing loveliness in sea and sky and air, that attunes our souls to harmony.

Nothing can be finer or more refining than the deep and profound repose of the twilight of the East. Yet we have had our trials in the hotel, notwithstanding. Our fat little landlady flies about in stiff and ample skirts, that rattle like paper at every step she takes. Our little landlady has a son, who lately let slip a foolish word, and he had to pay the penalty of his folly. It seems that a native Christian had

sought refuge from the tax-gatherer under our metaphorical wings. He was discovered, seized by the soldiers, and borne away to prison. The landlady's boy, hot-blooded and glib-tongued, made several remarks concerning the Prophet, highly offensive to the ears of the Mohammedans. This occurred about 10.00 a. m. The boy was of French parentage and a French subject. A steamer chanced to be up for Marseilles. The poor fellow was instantly banished for life; and that steamer bore him away in the afternoon, leaving his grief-stricken parents to mourn the loss of their only child, and to pay a fine of some hundreds of francs. And now our poor little landlady is so sorry, that the starch has all gone out of her skirts, and she wanders about the house looking like a big top with the hum carefully extracted. Meanwhile, the Turks are crucifying dogs against doors in derision of Our Savior's Death, and we hear horrible rumors of approaching slaughter, a repetition of the barbarities of 1860. Such is life under the crescent when the Turks have smelt blood.

The last night in Beirut the moonlight flooded the garden under my latticed window, and the light was so green it looked as if it had been filtered through an emerald. On the other side of the house lay a mysterious orchard of figs and pomegranates; a few

cypresses in the distance were as black and as stately as obelisks; the far-away mountains soared to heaven, and were as vapory as banks of clouds. In the midst of the garden stood two Arab towers, illuminated, and with their great arched windows glowing like half-moons. I heard the tinkling lute-strings, the throbbing drums, and sweet, wild flute-notes; and from time to time the joyous laughter of girls filled the garden with a music such as the followers of the Prophet delight in—and there, though we be Christians, we can strike hands with them heartily and honestly. It was my last night in Beirut. It began like a dream of delight, it ended in hot sirocco, that filled the air with red sand-clouds, and made the palms of my hands tingle and my eyes smart with pain.

For hours I had tossed on my sleepless couch, the victim of dumb mosquitoes, that drop on you like sparks of fire; of a mouse in the corner; of swift flashes of heat-lightning, and a vision of stormy seas. But on the morrow the wind perished, and Beirut was consumed in her own furnace heat.



## VIII.

### GLIMPSES OF ASIA MINOR.

The farewells had scarce been said. On the day following, while we swung at anchor off Beirut, steam up, and the warning whistle screaming savagely at the tardy flight of the shore-folk—the warmth of the last hand-clasp still tingled in our palms, when we dismissed Syria and all her manifold associations, and turned eagerly and studiously to the charts of our new cruise. So soon does the prospect of a fresh experience obliterate the impressions of the past in the barbaric and bewildering East!

It was twilight. The shore was bathed in the soft radiance of the after-glow; Lebanon towered above us like a mount of glory; the land breeze stole over the sea freighted with the delicious odor of citron groves. It was an hour picked out of ten thousand—an hour that one never forgets.

Near us three ships lay at anchor; their steam was also up; their decks swarmed with excited people, and an unbroken line of small boats and lighters passed to and fro between the ships and shore. The Sultan had called for help, and Northern Syria was drained. These

barges bore some thousands of men (I forget the exact number) out to the ships that were to convey them to the seat of war. They were all maddened with drink, and with the fanatical Turkish music that was heard on deck and echoed from the land. They joined the barbaric chorus, and thus took leave of the land they love with a lover's adoration, to meet their miserable fate at the front. It was said in Beirut that there was not time, nor inclination either, to properly provision the transport ships, and that the soldiers were to be put on short allowance immediately. It was said also that when fever or an epidemic breaks out on a Turkish troop ship, the victims are immediately dropped overboard, as it is easier to sacrifice a few than to endanger the many.

Old friends met us at table that night,—friends who had dropped in upon us at Cairo, the Nile cataract, Jerusalem, Damascus, and almost everywhere. We steamed over the smooth sea together, and paced the deck far into the night, smoking, dreaming, chatting, comparing notes, and laughing to think how small the world is, and how the traveler is forever renewing the chance acquaintance, which, agreeable as it is for the time, is usually dropped without more than a momentary regret.

At dawn our anchor chain whizzed over-

board, and the good ship trembled from stern to stern. We came to a standstill in a shallow sea, about the color of pea-soup, off the flat shores of Cyprus. The island is rather forbidding, all ashen-gray and dead. A few dusty palms and fewer cypresses rise above the low, white walls of the port, and they are the only greenish things visible. In the centre of the island, some miles back from the coast, rises a splendid mountain. I raked the ship to find some oracle who could give me its name. Of course our guide-books were all packed away. One never has a guide-book in hand when it is most needed. I ventured to pronounce it Olympus, but was frowned down by an enraged multitude not yet prepared for so glorious a spectacle.

All day long the ship rocked in an ugly chop-sea; but some of us, at the risk of a wetting, went on shore to stroll about one of the dullest towns in the world. We refused to purchase a half bushel of antique earthen vases for a mere song. Back for dinner, after a sand storm on shore and a spray bath in the little boat that bore us over to the ship again, we discovered that Mount Troadas—the old fellow towering 7,000 feet above the sea—is really the Cyprian Olympus. Out of these tumbling waters sprang the foam-born Venus. To this hour there is an annual festival in the island, much

frequented by virgins, who are there sought in marriage. What is this but a modification of the ancient rites observed by the Cyprians? The feast, called the "Deluge," is supposed to commemorate the birth of Venus, and all Cyprus on that day goes boating in honor of their beautiful but rather disreputable goddess.

The Cyprians were famous for their beauty. It was as much as a young man's heart was worth to go on shore in the old, old days. He may go now; for the maidens have grown peaked, and there is nothing left on the premises more tempting than a glass of weak lime juice, and a cigar so strong that it actually kicks in your teeth. Larnic, our seaport, is the ancient Chittim, the same that has been written of by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. This fact is the only interesting feature of the place.

We put off to sea at sunset, and hugged the island all that night; for there are 145 miles of her. Olympus was star-crowned and beautiful. The burnt-offerings that ascended in that purple dusk were fragrant in the nostrils of the faithful; and there was something pleasant, though pantheistical, in the thought that those skies were once clouded with gods.

All the following day we steamed along the coast of Asia Minor. How agreeable it was to turn from the blue desert, the watery waste,

and watch the huge mountains, the distant mist-filled valleys, and the cloud-like capes and promontories that bathed in the azure sea under the azure sky!

Another night, and in the early dawn that followed we came to a standstill in the harbor of ancient Rhodes. Coaling and the transfer of luggage made night so hideous that half the ship's passengers turned out in a state of alarm. It was still dark. Nothing in the harbor was visible but a huge revolving light, that threw at intervals a ghastly ray across the ink-black sea. By and by a cloud parted in the horizon and disclosed the skeleton of the moon, which lodged for a moment among the black spars of a ship that lay at anchor near us, and then fell and sank like a corpse in the dark waters of the sea.

This was the island that Apollo called from the waves, one of the oldest landmarks in history, possessing one of the finest climates in the world;—an island that has been much shaken by wars and earthquakes; that was fortified by the Knights of St. John, and is still lovely to look upon, though the Colossus fell long ago, and was carted away, nearly a thousand years later, on the humps of nine hundred camels. A Jew bought it for old iron, and no doubt it was a bargain. Would you believe it?—there is no authority for stating

that the Colossus, which was 105 feet high, stood over the mouth of the harbor with a foot on each shore. So perish, one after another, all pretty fables of antiquity—and more's the pity!

Under way once more for a cruise of four-and-twenty hours among islands the most famous in the world. Another night, with the sea so placid that the image of each star floats unbroken on its oily surface. Another morning, and our engine suddenly stops, reverses, stops again; a lot of little bells jingle in the engine-room; our anchor chain whizzes overboard. What a jolly sound it is, and what a good, long breath of satisfaction a fellow draws after it!

On the instant I run to my side light and have a picture all my own. I see back of the cumbrous brass frame of the bull's eye, through which I stare eagerly, a flour-white city, reflected in the sea, which kisses its very feet;—a snow-white city, blown like a drift along the slope of green mountains; an antique castle on the mountain top, and in the town below clusters of minarets looking like huge waxen candles, each tipped with a crescent flame. Off to the right a great forest of sombre cypresses. How like a funeral pall it sweeps across the shoulders of the mountains! This is Smyrna—"infidel Smyrna"—a city of

200,000 souls, of whom 90,000 are Greeks, 80,000 Turks, and the others Catholics or Jews.

Our ship was soon deserted; the morning coffee was forgotten in the excitement of the hour; twenty caiques were laden to the water's edge, and as the *imbat*—the daily zephyr that blows the breath of the plague out of Smyrna—was rising, we hoisted sail and did the regatta business for about fifteen minutes in the most gorgeous style.

There are rugs and carpets in Smyrna; there are sponges, emery, chrome ore, madder root, liquorice paste, opium, and attar of rose. Smyrna was a great cotton port before the rise of New Orleans; now it runs to mulberries and silkworms; but, after all, it is the fig of Smyrna which sweetens our memory of a brief sojourn among its booths and bazaars.

Would you believe it?—there are people who actually search for the site of the church writ of in the Apocalypse; Smyrna was one of the seven referred to by St. John. The obliging guides kindly point out one ruin or another, in order to supply the demand; but in the ancient Acropolis, on the slope of the mountain back of the town, there is a ruined mosque. This was originally a Christian Church, and there St. Polycarp preached. A little below it, on the site of the *stadium*, the Saint was martyred.

A solitary cypress stands like a funeral shaft to mark the hallowed spot.

A railroad strikes out from Smyrna for the heart of Asia. It runs through Ephesus, 48 miles distant, and thither most pilgrims follow it. Even in this brief excursion you fall among the fugitives and the heralds of the nomadic tribes that stretch all the way to China. There are real gypsies here, with their own tongue, their own religion, and with inimitable vices and virtues, likewise all their own. What is left of Ephesus is a crumbling tower, a few shattered columns, subterranean chambers, the outlines of Cyclopean walls, and a handful of troublesome people, who bore you with antique coins and bits of ancient pottery. The desolation of Ephesus defies description. Dramatic justice seems to demand the total annihilation of a city whose origin is attributed to the gods, though its chief temple was one of the seven wonders of the world; and the city itself was, next to Jerusalem, the holiest of Christian cities, and the most noted in Apostolic labors.

The Ephesus of to-day is a meadow, littered with fragments of marble, and in many places undermined. Even the primitive plow of the Levant would find it difficult to tear the sod in so strong a field. This was the refuge of Latona; the cradle of Apollo and Diana; the haunt of the great god Pan; the scene of the



metamorphosis of Syrinx into a reed; the chief seat of the Amazons, where Bacchus contended with them, and Hercules defeated them. Ephesus contended for the honor of Homer's birth; she had her poets—Callinus and Musæus—and her schools of philosophy, painting, sculpture, architecture, metal work, magic, and afterward of Christian philosophy. The heroes of two thousand years visited Ephesus, and are associated with her history. Antony and Cleopatra held gorgeous revels in the splendid city, and, thence collecting players and musicians, they sailed for Samos in a fleet of barges, the sight of which must have recalled the days and the deeds of the gods.

The Christian history of Ephesus is no less remarkable. Almost within the shadow of the sacred grove where Pan piped and where Diana slew Orion; where the statue of Hecate was enshrined, the magnificence of which was so terrible that men were struck blind with the sight of it; where the Eleusinian mysteries and the mysteries of Ceres were celebrated—here Paul planted and Apollos watered; St. John the Evangelist, released from Patmos, found sanctuary and death in the bosom of the first of the seven churches which he had addressed in his Revelation. Tradition mingles with the fame of Ephesus the name of the Blessed Virgin and of St. Mary Magdalene,

as well as many others. But the Grotto of the Seven Sleepers is, perhaps, the most famous shrine in the vicinity; for it has been a place of pilgrimage during fifteen centuries, not only for Christians but for Mohammedans, who have a chapter on the Grotto in their Koran. To-day you may purchase in the Talisman Bazaar of Smyrna golden medals or precious stones engraved with the names of the Seven Sleepers, and these are warranted to act as a powerful charm against evil.

"Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" was the cry that once rang through the glorious city, but the cry was raised for one who is greater than all others; and, though the city was "nigh unto the sea," and its port is one of the great inlets to the East, there is nothing of it left but a few marbles that are moss-grown, and a few chambers that are filled with mould, and all its history is as a handful of leaves that are scattered in the winds.

Having restored my soul with the figs and sherbet of Smyrna, I was ready to laugh at the burden bearers that stagger through the streets humped like camels; they all wear a kind of leather saddle strapped to their shoulders, that makes a platform back of their neck. They are as strong as giants, and trot off with astonishing burdens; anything, in fact, from a piano to a small cottage.

Boom! it was the gun from our ship, and a peremptory recall. We swallowed our coffee in a little ball of soft black grounds—the less liquor the more delicious the draught in the mouth of a Mohammedan—sprang into a caique, spread sail in a stiff breeze, and plunged over the tossing waves in a perpetual shower of spray. Smyrna, far astern, looked decidedly pretty from the sea; but our visit reminded us of some impromptu picnic rather than of anything more serious; yet Smyrna was called in her day the Forest of Philosophers, the Museum of Ionia, the Asylum of the Muses and Graces, and she is now known as the pleasure-house of the seductive Smyrniot, whom “Eothen” calls the young Persephone, transcendent Queen of Shades!

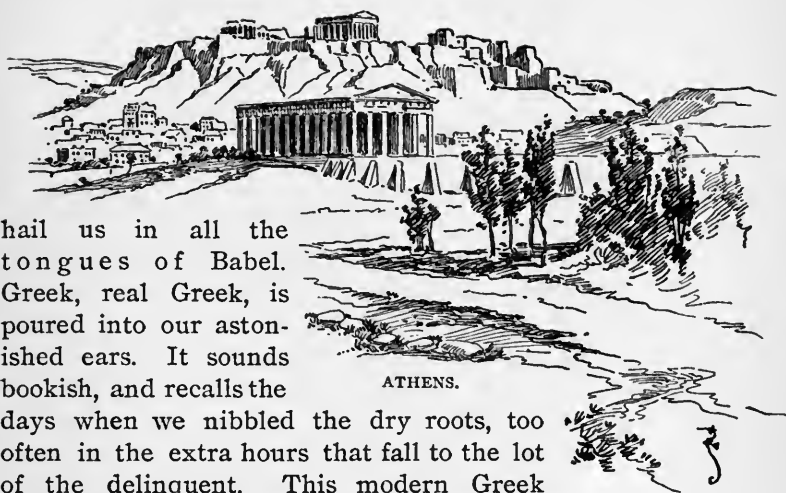
## IX.

### ATHENS.

En Route! A night's sail from Smyrna brings the voyager to Syra. Piræus, the port of Athens, is but six or seven hours distant from Syra across the Homeric Sea. Syra is Greek to the backbone. The town climbs the steep slope of a high hill, so that the houses seem set one upon the other. They are all white and ugly. Not a green thing is visible; even the island is dust-colored and naked. Syra, with its pyramid of houses, looks as if it were built of cards; as if the first gust from the right quarter would carry the city off over the sea and scatter it on the four winds.

The harbor of Piræus is scarcely less unlovely. To be sure, you are pointed to the tomb of Themistocles, on the promontory, and yonder towers the Acropolis; and the peaks of Parnes, Hymettus and Pentelicus are crowned with glorious light; but close at hand there are store-houses and custom-houses, and many a hovel that is suggestive of poverty and domestic filth.

Our anchor is no sooner overboard than swarms of natives storm us. Hotel runners



hail us in all the tongues of Babel. Greek, real Greek, is poured into our astonished ears. It sounds bookish, and recalls the days when we nibbled the dry roots, too often in the extra hours that fall to the lot of the delinquent. This modern Greek sounds well enough and looks well enough, but it resembles the royal tongue of Homer only to the degree that the modern Athenian resembles his illustrious god-nourished predecessor. It is spurious, and to be guarded against. It is half a page of the Iliad dealt out in the limping lingo of the fellow at the foot of his form.

The omnibus that plies between Piræus and Athens is certainly preferable to the rail that likewise modernizes and disfigures the capital of Greece. The road is most interesting. You can scarcely turn your eyes without discovering some improvement—evidence of the new life that seems to be awakening in the heart of that long-slumbering nation, and of which, naturally enough, they are immensely proud.

The six-mile drive from the seaport to the capital is too soon ended, and the splendor of modern Athens bursts upon the beholder quite unexpectedly. Young Athens might easily be mistaken for a small German capital. The Bavarian influence is indelible; and though King Otho has made his bow and retired, and a new king and a new constitution have come to the troubled surface, this modern Athens will probably increase and multiply in every phase and feature that is German until the last feeble remnant of the original race has burst with pride and mingled its dust with the sacred soil of Attica.

Athens has broad, glaring streets, full of heat in summer, and ever open to the carousal of the winds from the stormy gulfs. There are rows of smallish German cottages, snow-white, two-storied, isolated, in well-trimmed gardens. You are cunningly lured on to the *Grand Place du Palais*, and there in a single glance your eye takes in the galaxy of modern monuments that stand as indisputable proofs of the survival of art on the soil where it reached its highest perfection. Here you have the Royal Palace—which ought not to complain if it were mistaken for a woolen factory, and here also are three huge hotels, brilliant with balconies and bunting, and with a pension of twelve francs a day.

There are other buildings in Athens just as big and just as ugly. There are *cafés* without number, but not by any means without attractions, for the coffee of the Orient is here brought you in a semi-solid state, and the divine nargileh is unwound by the young man in the fez, who is not bad-looking, and is a tolerable shot. They will strike your lips at three paces, these pipe-boys, with a coil of hose on their arm and an extra half franc in their eye. Bad music of a windy afternoon in the *Place du Palais*, sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, mingled with the rumble of chariot-wheels, the click of festive glasses, and the hubble-bubble of the water-pipe at my lips and yours—is it not Athens?

Are we not in Greece? See the Franco-Greek names on the street corners—*Rue d'Hermes*, *Rue du Stade*, *Rue de Minerve*, *Rue d'Eole*, *Boulevard des Philhellenes*. The Greek names on the houses, the shop signs, the bulletin boards—do they not set you thinking on the half-forgotten cases? Is it not pleasant to know that the Gate of Adrian is within a stone's throw—if one is a tolerable stone-thrower—and that the temple of Zeus Olympus (the Olympieum) is just above the English Church?

From the *Place du Palais*, from the top windows of the hotels, from the broad, straight

street, one always comes sooner or later, by one method of locomotion or another, to the Acropolis. This also must be accidental; for time, that deals so tenderly with the treasures of antique art, has brought hordes of iconoclasts to the summit of that forsaken altar, and there they have dealt death and destruction to whatever was susceptible to the barbarous hand of man. It is not unlikely that in the flight of the gods mankind lost his reverence for the purely beautiful; they took with them that finer faculty—the sentiment is called feminine to-day, it may be considered infantile to-morrow—for the want of which the world is now suffering sorely. If I am somewhat obscure, I trust I shall be pardoned by all those who have approached Athens with due reverence, and have wished it to the old boy within the next four-and-twenty hours.

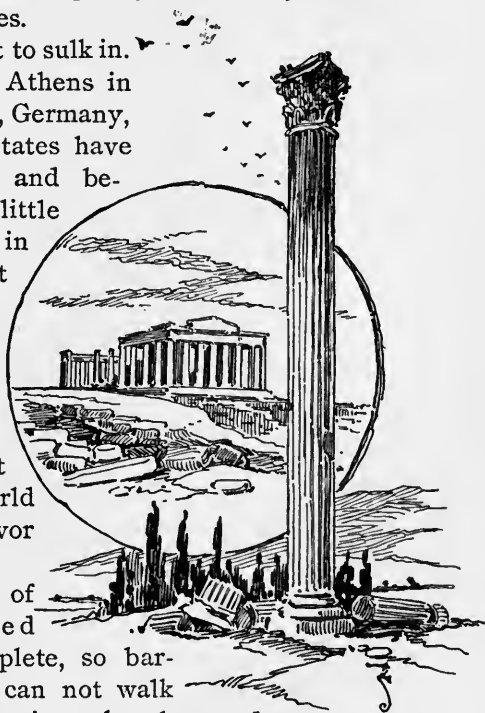
One takes coffee repeatedly, and drives again and again with this friend or that. One smokes religiously, listens to the vile music in the *Place du Palais*, sleeps late in the morning, after having done the Acropolis by sunrise; and the argument of the new Iliad seldom rises above this miserable round. If the Porch of Adrian or the Temple of the Winds finds a corner in the conversation, the one or the other is immediately laughed out of countenance by the young woman you met in Cairo and passed



on the wing at Nazareth, but who is resting in Athens and has everything to talk of save Athens. The fellow who proposes to join you in the siege of Constantinople is a conscientious mole; but, bless him! he is dry as salt fish, and wrings the last dew of poetry from every subject that he touches.

Athens is a spot to sulk in. I have sulked in Athens in my day. England, Germany, and the United States have combined forces, and between them the little Greek that is left in Greece is of that nature which God alone in His infinite mercy can tolerate for a moment. In such a mood the finest ruin in the world would find no favor in my eyes.

But the wreck of that consecrated mount is so complete, so barbarous, that one can not walk without striking against the shattered marbles, and everywhere the finger of



THE PARTHENON.

vandalism has profaned the fairest monument of time. Does any one conjure up the shades of the past from a sepulchre like this? Let me, rather, fly to the uttermost parts of Attica—and that is only a little way—even to bee-haunted Hymettus, or to any convenient distance, where I can turn away from the insufferable stupidity of this young Athens, and look alone upon the Parthenon in the blue edge of the twilight.

The Parthenon! It rises above the plains as chaste as a virgin of the temple; it seems to separate itself from the earth, to unfold itself in mystery awful and profound; to hold once more communion with the gods. The after-glow that illumines the inner temple rekindles the fires upon the flower-wreathed altars. I fancy I see the priestess, followed by her white-robed flock, and I think I hear the chant of voices and the wild melody of flutes. Or is it the piping of some shepherd boy sitting in the thyme and clover on the banks of the trickling Ilissus? Color—pure, transparent, luminous color—floods the fair temple, and in that heavenly light the gods descend and sit again in their seats, clad in immortality. The best inspiration of the artist cannot approach the exquisite loveliness of this scene; but it is as brief as it is perfect, and night veils the silent temple in a shower of golden stars.

The climax is over, and over for better, for worse. In the next moment I find myself thinking of Pericles and Phidias as if they were merely fables, and trying to glorify Xerxes, but failing utterly in the attempt. The view from the Acropolis is no less splendid, but it must be indeed from it, not in it. What the moon does for white marble is too well known for me to dwell on. So, also, is the geography of all these splendid ruins. I can only add that after one has duly execrated the memory of Lord Elgin, as every one is bound to do so sure as he sees the wreck that noble lord accomplished; having been again and again over the same old drives, and some of them are really interesting; having concluded that Nike Apteros, the Unwinged Victory, had doubtless the best of reasons for deserting her Athenian worshipers, one is fully ready to gird up his loins and depart—at least I was.

So it came to pass that having resolved to enlist in the ranks of the adorers of Minerva Parthenos, who overlooked all Greece and the outer world, and to cut Minerva Polias henceforth and forever, because her statue looked at home—and were she not wall-eyed she would to-day be sick at heart for the sights that are to be seen there; having bid adieu to Tom, Dick and Harry, the Governor, the Prince, two Counts and one Ambassador, I look my last on

the gentlemen in petticoats from Albania, and wonder when the last vestige of the poetic, the picturesque and the artistic will have died out on this soil. Not long hence, I fancy; for the Acropolis is to-day a fitting type of the hopeless ruin of that ill-fated race.

However, in the torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of our passion, with our toes heading for the Hellespont and our heels ridding themselves of the last particle of classical Greek dust, we must not forget, my friends, that Athens—not this cheap modern Athens, but the Athens that is dead and gone—was once a city set upon a hill, whose light could not be hid; was once the cradle of the arts, the temple and the throne of beauty, the glory of the world!

## X.

### A CRUISE IN THE HOMERIC SEA.

The deck is covered with easy chairs, the awning is spread. Everywhere I meet familiar faces, companions of voyages past, and within an hour have settled myself to the full enjoyment of a cruise in classical waters. It is time for us to lay old Homer wide open upon our knees; let him be our guide among the blessed islands that flock about us like low-hanging clouds—Telos, Syne, Chalce; they are not much sung of, and never were, but they have at least a harbor and a temple to Apollo—the former deserted and the latter in ruins.

It is the chaste *Diana*, the swift, black ship, that bears us over the watery paths of the much-resounding sea. They are watery paths, indeed, that separate island from island, and finally lose themselves between the thousand shores through which we thread our way. It is like river-sailing, this coasting among the Isles of Greece; it is the Nile over again, but with more variety and less beauty; for these islands, despite their name and fame, are bare and bleak—even Kalimno, Astypalæa and Kos, the most picturesque of the Sporades. Do you

remember how Juno bore Jove away in a sleep to well-inhabited Kos?

High-thundering, hospitable Jove! Saturnian, lofty-throned Jove, father of gods and men! Were you mocking us mortals, or are we godlike when we fall from grace even as you fell?

Little Nisyros, with its population of twenty-five hundred almond and wine growers, was torn from the island of Kos by Poseidon, who hurled it at the giant Polybetes—but you would hardly believe it if you did not hear it on the spot.

We are deeply interested in our progress now. Not an hour passes without the upheaval of some new island from the deep. They file past us in august procession—the shades of the gods of the Iliad; we seem to sleep upon the sea as they float by—the islands of our dream.

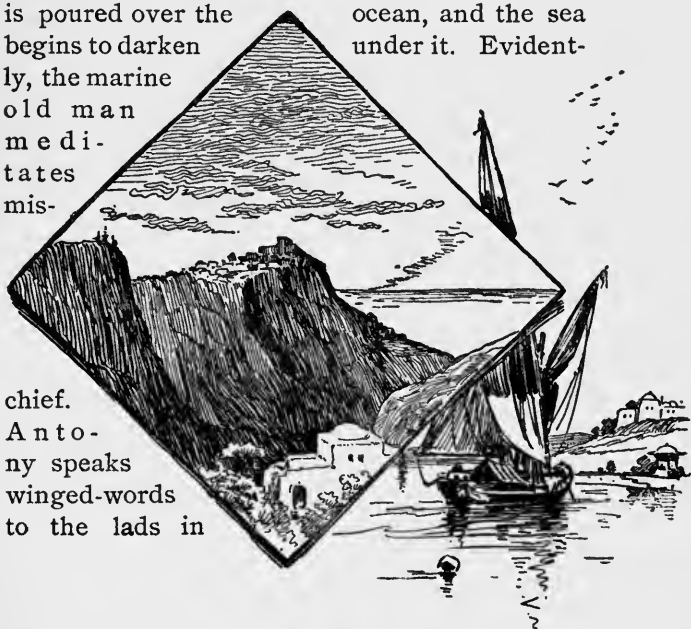
Yonder lies a wild and barren bluff that has held our eye for half an hour. We turn from the rocky coast close at hand, with the ruins above it, and from all the magical isles that are fast fading in the distance and losing themselves in the sea—for yonder is Patmos, where St. John wrote the Apocalypse during his exile, A. D. 94, and where the Monks still show his cave and a deep fissure in the rock through which the Apostle heard “a voice from heaven like the sound of a trumpet.”

And there is Samos, once the centre of Ionian art and luxury, whose ancient capital Herodotus reckoned one of the first cities of the world. Antony and Cleopatra caroused there; and, doubtless, their fair-prowed galleys, manned by Jove-nurtured youths, were of a piece with the beaked ships and the hollow barks of Homer's rolling-eyed Greeks.

Methinks I see them now, as they erect the mast and expanded the white sail; the wind streams into the bosom of the sail and they cruise under the blameless escort of the gods. Anon, the ripple of the west wind, just risen, is poured over the ocean, and the sea begins to darken under it. Evidently,

the marine  
old man  
medi-  
tates  
mis-

chief.  
Anto-  
ny speaks  
winged-words  
to the lads in



PATMOS.

the fo' castle; Cleopatra screams and wrings her hands, but the boys rather like it: they propose to appease the gods by chanting the joyous pæan, hymning the "fardarter," and they do it in the good old style. The result is highly satisfactory. It is written, "Whoever obeys the gods, to him they hearken propitiously." The hoary sea, the darkling vision subsides; they 'bout ship and make for land.

Antony whistles softly to himself; Cleopatra sighs and smiles faintly; the boys raise a hearty chorus, which has unhappily not been preserved to us, and so they enter the deep haven, furl the sails and store them in the sable bark; bring the mast to its receptacle, loosing it quickly by its stays; come to the moorings, heave out the sleepers and tie the hawsers, and then give three lusty cheers and a tiger, and all go up-town in a body to conduct a sacred hecatomb.

Such was the life they led of yore, perhaps; but now Samos is a little land, quiet and productive, crowned with grapes and yellow corn, and anointed with sweet oil.

Think for a moment of a meeting between a Trireme of the classic period and one of our modern mailed-monsters of the deep!

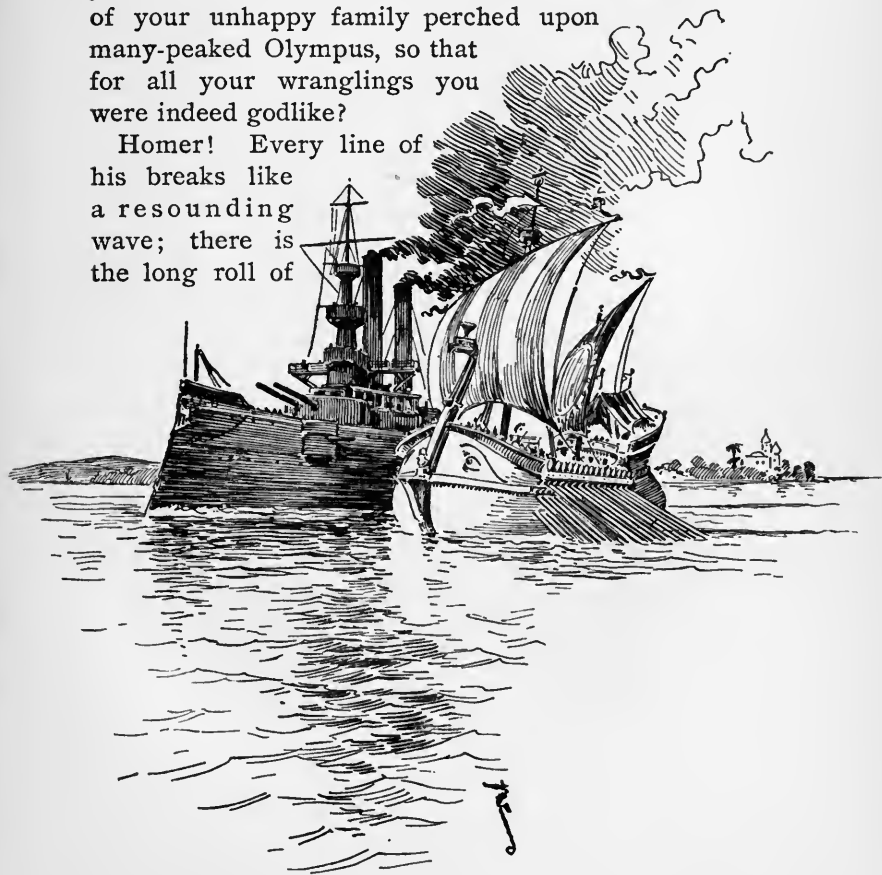
Off yonder, Iris, swift as the whirlwind, half-way between Samos and rugged Imbros, plunged into the dark sea; and the ocean



groaned. Here is Icaria in the Icarian Sea, where Icarus fell when the sun softened his waxen wings, as he flew out and over from Crete.

And Scio—Chios—let us make a libation to Jove! O Jove! Cloud-compelling son of Saturn! Olympian thunderer! Provident Jove! Is this not the cradle of him who sang of your unhappy family perched upon many-peaked Olympus, so that for all your wranglings you were indeed godlike?

Homer! Every line of his breaks like a resounding wave; there is the long roll of



the sea in it, and the strong swell of the tide. Would the ever-existing gods have given color to our lives but for him, I wonder? And he, at whose beck the Immortals plunged from splendid Olympus into the profound sea—hateful darkness seized him, black death overshadowed him.

Thou far-seeing son of Saturn, seated on lofty Gargarus, encircled round with an odoriferous cloud, didst thou order mourning for forty days in thy court when the blind old man of Scio's rocky isle went down to shameless death?

Now must we search in vain for his shrine who possessed the most royal of the distinguished gifts of the gods—a gift he left richer and more distinguished than when he first received it. But for him, thou fickle and foolish god, because of thy childish pranks and the folly of thy crew, the world would quake with inextinguishable laughter! Through the olive, citron, and mastic groves of Scio, the shade of Homer drifts. Let us embark a hecatomb; let us apply the iron strength of fire, that the savor of lambs and unblemished goats may ascend to snowy Olympus and salute the nostrils of the gods derisively; they have done ill by him who did well by them, for his name is worthiest to shine among the glorious stars.

Beyond Scio is Lesbos — Mytilene — the

birthplace of the Lesbian Sappho. Our pleasure voyage here suffers a break, which is, however, temporary. We shut Homer between finger and thumb, keeping a digit on the last line, and turn our hearts to the gods who have stirred up the elements to our discomfiture. These placid seas are swept by sudden winds, bitter cold, charged with sleet, and bent on destruction. A capital place this for a general smash-up of navies; islands on every side, strong sea currents rushing between them; fleets of merchantmen tacking hither and thither, now hidden by a headland, anon coming suddenly into view, close at hand and perhaps bearing down upon us wing and wing; the steamer must turn out for each and all of these flying sails, and some of the turns are pretty sharp ones.

We were basking in a delicious twilight when the gale struck us; sea and sky were charged with color; we floated in a flood of wine, under a canopy of roses. Instantaneously the heavens opened, and all the winds sprang at us like wild beasts; it was as if we were about to be torn to pieces and scattered broadcast over the rocky waste.

The decks were cleared for action; every one leaped out of the easy chair in which he had been crouched the whole day long; hats went overboard; shawls fluttered in the wind like

banners; scarfs and kerchiefs floated in the air; naught but the sound of hurrying feet and the screams of women were heard above the crash of elements.

We turned in uneasily; the *Diana* was heavily laden. A whole harem, booked for a deck passage to Constantinople, was stored aft, just under my cabin window. I had seen the faces of these women, who, swathed to the eyes in ample wrappings, forgot themselves in the placid hours of the afternoon, and thoughtlessly revealed more of their features than the law allows. I had even stolen a glance at their proud lips; their full, pale, olive cheeks; their slumberous eyes veiled in shadow-fringed lids; their fine aquiline noses with nostrils such as eastern poets sing of in their brilliant hyperbole—it is all one to them whether it be houri or lustrous-eyed, pink-nostriled mare of the desert: but I was discovered; the merry wives turned on me a look of scorn, and all the heads were hastily covered amid shrieks of horror such as only the ladies of the harem have brought to the pitch of dramatic perfection.

Well! While the wind blew and the waves rose, I lay in my narrow bunk and said the rosary of agonies over and over, for I hate to be knocked about in a box of a stateroom. The ship behaved nobly, rising easily on the

tremendous swell and taking headers like a huge porpoise. By and by the harem lifted up its voice and wept; babes moaned piteously; mothers sobbed and implored *Allah*. In this extremity we fled into Lesbos and hid for four mortal hours under the lea of the land.

There was no sleep that night. The air was fraught with terror, and when the gale was highest, and the long roll of the thunder made our good ship shudder in her watery bed, I fancied I could hear the crashing of ill-fated barks as they were hurled upon the horrible rocks about us, or dashed together in the blackly-boiling waters and swallowed in abysmal depths.

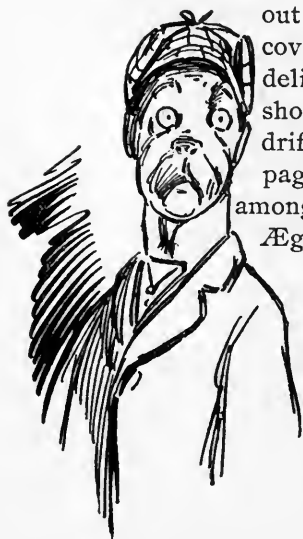
The morning after the storm, being again under way, we sat about the deck, silently regarding one another. Many and various were my fellow-voyagers. There was a haughty Greek patriarch, who played with his beads, letting them *click* one after another as they slid down the silken thread which confined them. There was a babyish Count, and a stiff Pole, also reputed to be of noble birth; a fat and jolly Englishman, and a stiff and bristling one,—the latter with a piping child-wife, whose hair streamed down her back in a yellow torrent; there was an ice-cold universalist who buttoned his coat to his chin, and whistled “Annie Laurie” very softly, by the

hour; and a nervous little New Zealander who has been everywhere two or three times, and is going over the whole round forever and ever, like the hour-hand of a clock. We picked up strangers at the several ports we visited, and nearly always looked upon them as intruders; and such they were in many cases; for they sat in our chairs and crowded us out of our places in the coolest manner possible.

I turn again to my notes to find this record: "Just now a rabbit-faced man, with protruding globulous eyes has taken a seat opposite me. He is frequently abstracted, and looks like a maniac as he loses himself in thought and lets his eyes roll out on his cheek-bones. I glance up in search of a word, detect him in one of his trances, feel guilty, turn from the table to stare

out of the window, and there discover a white city glowing among delicious groves of cypress on the shore of a fair island. Thus life drifts away with us through all the pages of Homer, while we roll among the dashing waves of the Ægean Sea."

One or two Greek professors—or rather professors of Greek—are in a state of siege. We apply to them continually and, as is not unfrequently the case,



THE RABBIT-FACED MAN.

find them dumb without their text-books. All the vexed questions are tossed from mouth to mouth, until the whole subject has been worn to shreds and scattered to the four winds.

Over our larboard quarter lie divine Lemnos, Imbros, and Tenedos; before us is the Hellespont, and there is the Troad. Speed us, thou of the silver bow, who nightly rulest over Tenedos! Here, beneath us, is the ample cave in the recesses of the deep sea, between Tenedos and rugged Imbros, where earth-shaking Neptune loosed his horses, cast beside them ambrosial fodder, threw golden fetters about their feet, irrefragable, indissoluble, and departed toward the army of the Greeks.

There is a report current in the ship that we shall not be permitted to pass the Hellespont; that if we succeed in this, there will be no landing at Constantinople; in any case, danger threatens us on every hand. Shall we put back? is the question. Certainly not! As of old, when the well-greaved Greeks were turned afresh upon the lofty-gated Troy they grew doughty in the din of battle, so with us: war, or the rumors of war, became instantly sweeter than to return in the hollow ship to our dear native land. On we move, over the broad back of the deep. To our right is a low, gray plain, a picture of desolation. Mountains rise in the distance, colorless and bare. A

channel opens before us; it is about five miles broad at the mouth; poor villages and forts dot the shore on either hand; fleets of boats blow hither and thither in a chopping sea. The current is very strong, so is the wind. We draw our wraps closely about us, shut our books and maps to keep them from flying overboard, and turn our attention to the progress of the ship.

Personally, I find nothing lovely or interesting in the scene; on the contrary, it seems to me uncommonly bleak and stupid. The shores are irregular, bare and brown; we cross and recross from side to side, like a huge ferry-boat, dropping a boat-load of passengers at one port, taking up a few at the next. Rather dull work this, though we are detained only a few minutes at each stopping-place, and these intervals are enlivened by the advent of numerous natives who importune us to buy their pottery; they bring earthen vases and rude toys moulded in clay; bits of metal work of dubious date, and enough rubbish to distract a traveler who has not been out of his valise for months; yet he covets a toy horse done in terra-cotta, ludicrously fashioned and spotted over with paint. This is offered as a souvenir of the "Odyssey." Who would not bring a trophy from the shores of Troy?

There is no spot in the world more interest-



ing to the classical student than this dreary waste. We are in the Dardanelles, the Hellespont! Leander swam it; so did Byron; so do we—in a ship! That bleak plain is the very fertile Troad. Somewhere within its borders is buried wind-swept Ilium. O wise Homer! who spared not that city for all its pomp!

Almost with laughter we study the howling wilderness where stood the wide-wayed Troy; it is a wilderness, and it howls as we steam to and fro, touching along its shores from time to time. Up yonder is many-rilled Ida. Do you remember how sleep sat in a lofty fir on Ida, covered with branches like a shrill bird?

There, on the one hand, is Asia, and here, on the other, is Europe; the channel that divides them bristles with cannon; they hold their peace at present, but they are ready at a moment's warning to spit fire and to deluge the earth with blood, even as it was deluged when Mars, the man-slayer, the gore-stained stormer of walls; and Ulysses, the sacker of cities; the horse-breaking Trojans; the hair-tufted Thracians, and all the gods, made it hot in the vicinity of well-turreted Troy.

Imagine a hero, clothed in dazzling brass, strutting and fuming among his soldiers, athirst for blood and glory as he thus addresses them: "Pile up for him a tomb on the wide Hellespont, and thereafter will some one of the

future men say, as he sails over the sea in his many-benched ship, 'This indeed is the tomb of a hero long since deceased, whom once, bearing himself doughtily, illustrious Hector slew.' "

I did not hear it remarked in our many-benched ship, save by the Professor who has a finger on the passage at this moment; but times have changed since then.

What days were those when the warriors came in from the sea and forty dark ships followed—recruits from the isles that lie as far as the eye can reach; some in red-sided ships, some in sable and curved ships, from steed-nourishing Argos, and from all the sunset lands; each fleet with its admiral and its clear-voiced heralds, and forty dark ships following!

From the deck of the *Diana* we try to trace the field where thunder-delighting Jove—he must have been somewhat of a bore as to his noise—watched the waving-crested Greeks in the game of battle. We try to mark where Mars ran along Simois over Callicolona, between Troy and the seacoast;



A PROFESSOR OF GREEK.

to follow the course of the fairly-flowing river, the deep-eddying Xanthus, Jove-begotten; to conjure the shades of swift-footed Achilles, Jove-sprung son of Peleus; of much-counseling Ulysses; of helm-nodding Hector, fair-haired Helen, laughter-loving Venus, and all those beauteous girt women! We strive to see—in our mind's eye, of course—the huge bulk of the seven-sided shield of Ajax, the glance of impetuous Achilles' spear of Pelian ash, and to hear the noble Achilles grieving, for he was sending a blameless companion to Hades.

It didn't seem to matter much how many fellows satiated the swift dogs at Troy with their white fat, so long as they were not personal friends. We hope to hear, also, the tramp of high-necked steeds, nourished on lotos and lake-fed parsley, as they print the ground with their solid hoofs—but all this is mere fantasy!

Troy is no longer a city of articulate-speaking men; nor is it likely that we shall ever know more of it than we have learned from Homer.

Dr. Henry Schliemann's explorations and revelations prove nothing that has not been known since Homer's time, namely, that the Troad was inhabited, that the people and the cities have perished; that in all respects they were, both people and cities, much like other people and other cities.

Mr. Gladstone in his "Homeric Synchronism" upholds the Doctor in his dreams of Troy. Neither the one nor the other has proved, or is likely to prove beyond question, that the His-sarlik Mount is the site of ancient Troy. Sir William Gell's "Geography of the Troad" will, if they choose to consult it, set these gentlemen right on certain important points. Mr. Gladstone rushes at the conclusions offered him by Dr. Schliemann, and the two seem to have settled affairs entirely to their own satisfaction. Yet, Dr. Schliemann, who is seeking to identify the Ilium of Homer with nothing more substantial to base his judgment on than a few pieces of metal work and a good deal of earthen rubbish, does not hesitate to adjust his geographical outline according to his requirements, and to correct Homer, as is necessary, in order to prove his case.

Dr. Schliemann is not merely seeking to prove that he has unearthed a long buried city—there is no doubt as to that fact—but he insists that it is the veritable city of Homer's song, and offers as evidence the relics that have been discovered during his excavations. Is this not the dream of an enthusiast?

You will remember that Homer, in the seventh book of the Iliad, after the battle, tells how the long-haired Greeks built a wall and lofty towers, a bulwark of their ships and of

themselves. Neptune complains to Father Jove, and Jove replies:

“When the crest-waving Greeks shall have departed with their ships into their dear fatherland, do thou, overthrowing this wall, sink it all into the deep, and again cover the great shore with sand. Thus may this mighty rampart of the Greeks be wholly effaced.”

We read in the beginning of Book XII. that:

“In the tenth year the city of Priam was sacked, and the Greeks went in their ships to their dear fatherland; then, at length, Neptune and Apollo took counsel to demolish the wall, introducing the strength of rivers, as many as flow into the sea from the Idæan Mountains. . . . The mouths of all these Phœbus Apollo turned to the same spot, and for nine days he directed their streams against the wall. Jove, in the meantime, rained continually that he might the sooner render the walls overwhelmed by the sea. . . . And he (Neptune, the earth-shaker) made all level along the rapid Hellespont, and again covered the vast shore with sand, having demolished the wall; but then he turned the rivers to go back into their own channels in which they had formerly poured their sweet-flowing waters.”

When we bear in mind that the very site of Troy was forgotten after the fall; that the

country was colonized by Æolians and other races; that these cities and peoples have passed away in turn, and that the Troad was only retained in history because it lay in the track of the invading armies crossing the Hellespont from side to side, is it natural to suppose, after so many and such various vicissitudes, that the foundations of the ancient Ilium should be laid open, relics discovered, houses and tombs identified, and all this in opposition to certain lines in the *Iliad*—our earliest history of Troy—which point to a different site from that fixed upon by Dr. Schliemann?

Do we not read in the eighth book of the *Odyssey* how Demodocus, the bard, sang of the sons of the Greeks who destroyed the city (Ilium), being poured forth from the horse, having left the hollow ambush? One laid waste the city in one way and another in another—so runs the song.

Then Virgil, in the second and third books of the *Æneid*, adds his testimony:

“But the gods, the unrelenting gods, overthrew this powerful realm and leveled the towering tops of Troy with the ground. . . Here, where you see scattered ruins, and stones torn from stones, and smoke in waves ascending with mingled dust, Neptune shakes the walls and foundations, loosened by his mighty trident, and overturns the whole city

from its basis. . . . Then, indeed, all Ilium seemed to me at once to sink in the flames, and Troy, built by Neptune, to be overturned from the lowest foundations."

The truth is, we are trying—or the speculative Doctor is trying—to excavate a city founded by the gods and once peopled by mythical heroes; can anything be less practical, less profitable? Having cast our eyes over the nakedness of the land, we turn our thoughts to the future; joy cometh with the morning—a sunrise over the golden Horn, under the gardens of Stamboul!

It is more quiet this evening; the winds went down with the sun, even as the winds departed homeward returning through the Thracian Sea with its groaning billows, after having fed the fires that consumed the manes of Patroclus amid the bewailing Greeks. Some one has been giving a gratuitous dissertation on the events of the day, while I busy myself with these notes in a corner of the *salon*; then some one also sighs deeply—I look up to find the listeners listless and the speaker dumb; for, lo! ambrosial slumber is diffused around.

At an early hour, while we swim the Marmora like a black swan, I seek my room-mate, a jolly, blonde English lad, known to everybody as "The Eton Boy." He rushes everywhere, sees everything in a wild state of delight,

writes up his journal nightly—though for the most part his entries are copied from my loose notes borrowed for the occasion. To him life is fresh and sweet, the world his play-ground, and on his well turned biceps he bears the arms of Eton tattooed in a Jerusalem bazaar. What more can one ask of a beneficent Providence when one has youth, health, hope, and when one sleeps like a school-boy through tempest and tribulation, as he did the other night of storm?—slept with his head pillowed on his elbow, the arms of Eton still visible in the dim light of our cosy cabin, and his bare feet thrust into the side-light above his berth, as if, like a young Hercules, he had half a mind to kick out the ribs of the ship.



## XI.

### STAMBOUL.

All night we wallowed in the troubled sea of Marmora, and came too early in the morning upon the famous beauty of the Bosphorus. I was wakened at 6.00 a. m. by the sudden ceasing of the internal thunders one grows so used to when steaming over the sea; and, looking out of the sublime port in the upper bunk, I saw—not a vision of Oriental splendor, but only a London fog on a Thames shore, and so I turned in again.

But not for long. You know the symptoms of a general break-up, that grow more and more violent the nearer you approach the land. Coffee was scarcely tasted; everybody was plotting with his neighbor, and in the midst of this hopeless confusion we entered the mouth of the Golden Horn, and were instantly boarded by swarms of boatmen and commissioners.

Selecting our man, we took hold of one another's hands and cast ourselves over the bulwarks into a barge that tossed alongside the *Diana*. It was a good shot: we struck in the hold of the barge; cried aloud in chorus

and wrung our hands, until all our luggage was delivered up into the care of our dragoon, and then we set out for shore—the European shore, which lay about two hundred yards distant.

The Turks received us with more consideration than we had reason to expect. We were not hamstrung, nor beheaded, nor deprived of our wives and children. All our luggage was allowed to pass the customs with the slightest possible examination. There was but one suspicious character on the city front. One man eyed us with noticeable caution, and there seemed to be a motive in his watchful yet restless glance. Presently he approached us and presented his card. It read as follows:

FAR-AWAY MOSES,  
Dealer in Rugs, Embroidery, and all kinds of  
Oriental Goods.

A few days later we met in the bazaars, where he does the host with much dignity and no little profit. He is a very intelligent man, who speaks several languages, and vibrates between Constantinople and Cairo. He is sure to be seen here or there at the height of the tourist season, dispensing sherbet, coffee and cigarettes, and soliciting patronage in a fashion which is, to say the least, magnetic—and yet the greater share of his popularity is

doubtless due to the notoriety he has achieved through the pages of Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad."

Passing the customs without a scar, we all foot it up an exceedingly steep and badly paved street into Pera, the Frank suburb of Constantinople. Here there are better streets, and sometimes very serviceable sidewalks, fine stone houses, handsome stores, theatres, *cafés chantant*, bootblacks, carriages, glass arcades, and, in fact, everything you would not expect to find in this latitude. From the hotel window I look out upon the flashing waters of the Golden Horn, and, crossing one of the bridges that rest upon it, my eye is almost dazzled with the pomp of Stamboul. Like a harem beauty, she had veiled her face when we first approached

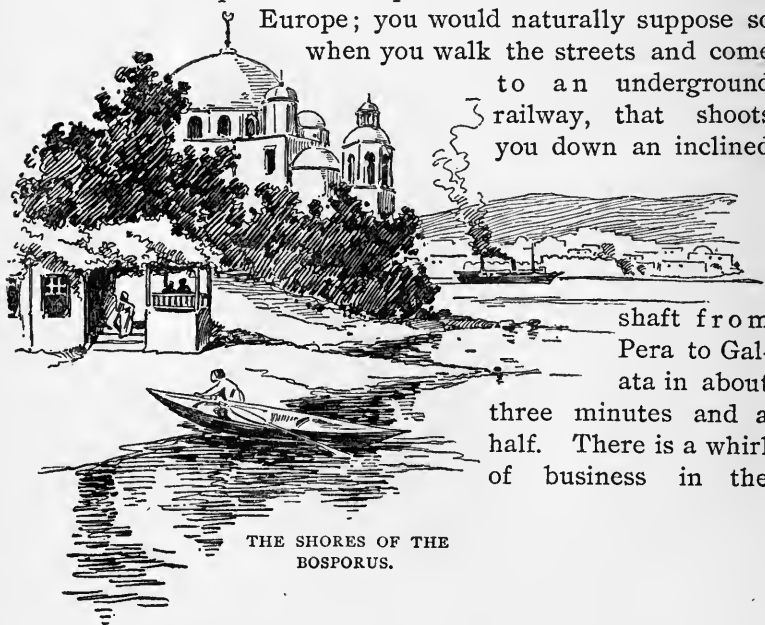


her; like a harem beauty, we have no sooner turned away from her than she withdraws her *yashmack* of mist and reveals to our delighted eyes her unrivaled loveliness.

Pera is very Frenchy; but there is no need of coming to Turkey to enjoy a cheap edition of Paris, so we at once gird on our armor and set forth for Stamboul—Galata, the Frank business quarter of Constantinople, lies on the Golden Horn opposite Stamboul. Pera is just above Galata, at the top of a very steep hill. The Bosphorus flows past Galata and Stamboul, across the mouth of the Golden Horn, and separates Europe from Asia. We are in

Europe; you would naturally suppose so when you walk the streets and come to an underground railway, that shoots you down an inclined

shaft from Pera to Galata in about three minutes and a half. There is a whirl of business in the



THE SHORES OF THE  
BOSPORUS.

streets of Galata. The noise is deafening; the street-cars are dragged to and fro, driven by native drivers, who toot fish-horns with as much apparent pleasure as a child his penny trumpet.

We cross a bridge of boats over the Golden Horn and enter Stamboul. A magnificent iron drawbridge was erected at a vast expense by an English company just above the present bridge. When the unfortunate Ab-dul-Aziz—whose favorite palace stands on the Bosphorus—grew nervous at the demonstrations of his people, he ordered the Turkish fleet of iron-clads, at that time anchored in the Golden Horn above the bridge, to be moored in front of his palace. Two of the ships, in trying to pass the drawbridge, were so badly managed that they stove in a large portion of the bridge, and sunk part of it to the bottom of the Golden Horn.

The Bridge of Boats is one of the great thoroughfares of the world. It is thronged continually with representatives of almost every nation of the globe. Even in Stamboul—the hotbed of fanaticism, where to this hour it is not safe for a Frank to go into the streets at night—in Stamboul the pavements ring with the flying wheels of the street-cars, driven at a reckless pace—reckless considering the stupidity, or perhaps I had better say

indolence, or indifference, of the population swarming under the wheels of the car. Here we pass into the division of the car allotted to the men. There is a separate corner for the veiled women, who express great disgust if a man dares enter it.

From this moment our eyes are never at rest. Ten thousand sights distract us—the fountains, the mosques, the tombs, the courts, wherein a few trees afford grateful shade, and where generally there are half a dozen barbers busily shaving their customers—both barber and the barbered squatted upon the ground like frogs. Your oriental barber hands you a shallow brazen bowl, with a deep indenture in the rim. You press your throat into this indenture, hold the bowl under your chin, and await with what composure you may the deluge of soap and water that is sure to follow. Fancy a dozen victims crouching in a row under a mimosa tree, each clutching his chin-bowl in an agony of suspense, while the suds streams from his beard and a little rivulet spouts from the point of his nose; the barbers meanwhile flourish their razors as if they were about to decapitate the poor fellows in the presence of an interested throng of spectators. Coffee, *chibouks*, story-tellers, and players upon flutes and lutes enliven the hours. This is a common spectacle in old Stamboul.

The Hippodrome now presents a dreary waste, strewn with dust and rubbish. You still trace the plan of an ancient circus, 900 feet in length, and 450 in breadth, designed by the Emperor Severus, who left it unfinished when he learned that the Gauls were threatening Rome. It is written that in the time of Nicetas the images of gods and heroes, wrought in brass and stone, that stood within this hippodrome outnumbered the population of the modern city. The precious marbles have been carried away by various sultans to ornament palace and mosque. The bronze statues, many of them masterpieces of antiquity, that had been preserved by the Christians against the fanaticism of these iconoclasts, all, or nearly all, were melted into rude coins; and now the dreary circus contains only a single obelisk of Egyptian syenite, the remains of a pyramid, originally ninety-four feet in height, and a brazen column of three twisted serpents, which Herodotus, Thucydides, and Pausanias saw in the Temple of Delphi. It was brought hither by Constantine, from the Forum of Arcadius, and has been mutilated by Mohammed the Conqueror and by other hands, so that its history alone makes it interesting to the eye.

The hundred and thirty baths and the hundred and eighty *khans* are so like the baths and *khans* that are found in the chief cities of the

East, that Stamboul can hardly pride herself upon them. They are one and all forbidding when viewed from the street, but within they offer the chief delights of the Levant—delicious waters that cleanse you and babble to you, pipes that tranquilize you and couches that invite you to repose. These luxuries are offered at so low a rate that there are few who may not enjoy them. The pipe is specially cheap. You bring your own tobacco, of the brand you most delight in, and a sou's worth will fill your nargileh. The nargileh furnished you at the *café* is lighted and relighted if necessary, and there you sit and smoke for a whole hour, or even longer, if your pipe is properly loaded; and for this great happiness you pay the pipe-boy two or three sous. For five sous you may play the gentleman for sixty minutes in the handsomest *café* in Stamboul.

Lounging among the shows in Stamboul, it is sometimes difficult to realize that you are in the famous capital of the East; there is a continual stir, a low rumbling, an earnest haste that is not characteristic of the Orient. The people lack repose. How different is the delicious silence of Damascus! Cairo, though it is Frankified, seems more in accordance with one's conception of the languid and luxurious life of the East.



Seeking this tranquillity, we descend into the cool, dusky depths of the Cistern of Constantine, called *Binbirdirek*, or the thousand and one columns. The immense subterranean chamber is dry; and as we stood among the shadowy columns, half blinded with the eternal darkness of the place, men and children stole up to us like ghosts and cried: "*Backsheesh!*" Even from the graves of the earth comes that continual wail. These gnomes are silkworms, who pass their lives in darkness, and probably never get more than one thin slice of sunshine per day; it falls in at the small door in the roof, and this morsel has to be divided among many.

Above ground there are fragments of an ancient aqueduct, antique columns that once bore aloft the statues of the gods, and a singular mixture of architectural monuments—ancient, modern, Eastern, Western, and non-descript. There is a "Madame Toussaud" collection of shockingly-ugly effigies, dressed in cheap costumes, and purporting to be the faithful counterparts of the officers under the sultan of the ancient rule: the chief of the janissaries, the sultan's dwarfs, executioner; eunuchs, black and white, etc. Many a faithful sight-seer turns away from this ridiculous exposition, burdened with the secret conviction that he has been completely sold.

But there are sights in Stamboul—yes, many of them, interesting and astonishing. Let us drop into the *seraglio*. The tongue of Stamboul is thrust into the midst of the waters of the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus, and the Sea of Marmora. It is an oblong hill, crowned with white walls, domes, and minarets, and hedged about with groves of black, funereal cypresses. Here stands the *seraglio*, which was for fifteen centuries the abiding place of the Ottoman Emperors. It is now used only on state occasions, and the palace, the courts, and the innumerable tenements that cover the promontory—the ground-plan of the *seraglio* is nearly three miles in circumference — are battered, dusty, and out of repair.

The Sublime Porte is singularly ugly, and anything but sublime. The buildings that cluster about the several courts have not, for the most part, the slightest pretension to architectural beauty, or even dignity. The second court is flanked by a row of nine kitchens, looking very much like nine limekilns. They are domed, but without chimneys, so the smoke passes out through a hole in the roof. Here the sultan and his court consumed annually 40,000 oxen; and there were daily brought to the table 200 sheep, 100 lambs, 10 calves, 200 hens, 200 pairs of pullets, 100 pairs of pigeons, and 50 green geese.

The late Sultan Abdul-Aziz was accustomed to feeding his family as bountifully, and still he was not happy! In the stables by the water side a thousand horses were formerly stalled, and among the cannon that sweep the sea and the mouth of the Bosphorus is one huge old fellow at whose hoarse voice Babylon surrendered to Sultan Murad.

The chief attraction of the *seraglio* is the treasury. Here, in a chamber by no means large, is gathered treasures such as one reads of in tales of *genii*. The actual value of this store of jewels is almost beyond conception. Each sultan seeks to exceed his predecessors in the richness of his additions to the collection, and the result is a dazzling but not very impressive array of theatrical-looking properties, that might just as well be made of glass and tinsel—the effect upon the spectator would be as pleasing. Picture to yourself a carpet crusted with pearls, many of them as large as sparrows' eggs; a throne of gold, frosted with pearls; draperies for the horses ridden by the sultans, embroidered with pearls and rubies; a cradle coated with precious stones; inlaid armor, jeweled helmets, sword-hilts—one of these is decorated with fifteen diamonds, each one as large as the top of a man's thumb; coffee trays of ebony, with a double row of enormous diamonds set close together; pipe-

stems, nargilehs, sword-belts, caskets, and bushels of necklaces of the most splendid description, heaped together in glass show-cases, and flashing like fireflies in the dark. The most costly article in the treasury is a toilet table of *lapis lazuli*, and other valuable materials, richly inlaid with precious stones of every description. The pillars that support the mirror are set with diamonds; the stem and claws of the table are covered with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, carbuncles, etc.; along the edge of the table hangs a deep fringe of diamonds, with immense *solitaire* tassels. The whole is a gorgeous—bore.

Multitudes of attendants are stationed through the apartment, and you may be sure that you are never left for a second unobserved by these watchful guardians of the treasure-house. How little faith has the infidel in the honesty of his believing brother!

What a relief it is to withdraw into the Kiosk of Bagdad—the private library of the sultan—to sit within eight walls that close about you like the exquisite panels of an ivory or tortoise-shell fan, under a dome of rose-tint and gold mosaic; and, shutting the doors of bronze, inlaid with pearls, against the world, one realizes, perhaps for the first time in his life, how pleasant a thing it is to be poor but honest! On the shelves of the library there

are several codices brought from the collection of King Matthias Corvinus at Buda, and there are dainty rolls and folios of parchment laid away, each in its separate case, and all looking very much as if they were not often disturbed.

From the Kiosk of Bagdad it is pleasant to look down into the deep garden of the *houris*, sloping to the swift Bosphorus, and to meditate on the lights of the harem that have suddenly gone out forever, quenched in that fatal flood; but, thinking on the stifled cries and the slimy shrouds dragged down into the pitiless deep, it is still pleasanter to rise superior to the situation, fee the custodian, and thank Heaven that you are not a *houri*.

The City of the Sultan has three Sundays in the week, so also have most of the cities of the East. One observes this to a striking degree in the bazaars and market-places. On Friday your Moslem goes to mosque; he shuts up shop and gives himself to prayer and meditation, to coffee and the nargileh, among the tombs of his ancestors or on the shores of the Sweet Waters. On Saturday, which is the Sabbath, the Jews put up their shutters, visit the synagogue, and enjoy the gossip of the *cafés*. On Sunday the Christians go to Mass, and seek rational recreation in their best clothes thereafter; so that for three days the business of the town is somewhat checked.

The mosques are never crowded; people are continually coming and going, dropping their slippers at the threshold, and advancing in their stocking-feet toward the prayer-niche, where they prostrate themselves, stand, kneel, turn their heads to right and left, and raise their hands in a fashion that is so mechanical one can hardly keep serious until the sight has ceased to be a novelty.

There are mosques in Stamboul that rival St. Sophia in magnitude and splendor. The Mosque of Suleiman is considered one of the most glorious monuments of Osmanli architecture. The court facing the entrance is bordered on three sides by colonnades supporting three-and-twenty exquisitely-fashioned domes. A fountain with a cupola stands in the centre of the court; the minarets spring from the four corners of an outer court. The effect is singularly chaste and elegant. Attached to this mosque are numerous endowments—three schools, four academies for the four sects of the faithful, and another for the reading of the Koran, a school of medicine, a hospital, a kitchen for the poor, a resting-place for travelers, a library, a fountain, a house of refuge for strangers, and a mausoleum. Several of the imperial mosques are as richly endowed. Mohammedan charity begins at mosque, and all good Mussulmans are very much at home in

their houses of prayer. The fourteen great mosques are built upon the self-same plan. They measure 225x205 feet, and are inclosed on the entrance side by a forecourt, and in the rear by a garden, or cemetery.

Beside these imperial mosques there are about 220 others, built by individuals of inferior rank, and 300 or more chapels, some of which are chiefly frequented by women. The Doves' Mosque, or the Mosque of Bajazet II. in Stamboul, has for me a special charm. The building was completed in 1505. The court is exceedingly beautiful. You enter by gates elaborately decorated in arabesque; the cloister that surrounds the court is inclosed by a range of columns of porphyry and *verd-antique*, with capitals of white marble ornamented in arabesque. In the centre of the court is a marble fountain under a canopy, and sheltered by a cluster of fine trees. As you enter the court you hear the roar of wings, and for a moment the air is darkened with the sudden flight of myriads of doves. These birds, the offspring of a pair purchased from a poor woman by Sultan Bajazet, and presented to the mosque, are as sacred as was the ibis of old. A grave and reverend fellow, with a huge turban, sits under the cloister, and sells grain to the faithful and the fickle. The former feed the doves for charity; the latter, for fun.

While the fountain is knee-deep with swarming birds, and the trees clogged with them, and all the eaves of the cloister lined, and even the high galleries of the slender minarets not unvisited by these feathered dervishes, you throw a handful of wheat into the court, and, like a thunder-cloud, the whole tribe swoops upon you with the rush and the roar of a storm. They crowd one another, and heap themselves together, and stand on their heads in their eagerness to get a morsel of grain. In a moment some one enters the court, and the birds take flight, stirring the wind in the cloister, and filling the air with soft-floating down. I almost envy the placid pleasure that the *granger* in the turban takes; for his way is easy and his burden light, and those doves are such delightful absurdities! There is his neighbor, against the next column, who sells rosaries and perfumes; and there is also the fellow at the gate who cries "Sherbet!" and clashes his brazen cups till they ring like cymbals; and there are loungers from dawn to dark, who drop in to see the doves of Bajazet plunge into the court like an avalanche of dusky, impurpled snow, and wheel out of it again, a winged cloud of smoke.

At this mosque on Fridays there is a distribution of bread to dogs, and the hungry ones come from all parts of the city to get their



portion; but just how long this benevolence will be possible it is hard to state. With the exception of a few of the finer mosques, the ecclesiastical endowments are being taken forcible possession of by the Government. The Government begins with promising to pay an equal income to the rightful authorities, but this promise is at first only partially fulfilled, and then deliberately ignored.

Near one of the mosques — in its actual shadow, where so many of the faithful find noonday rest and sleep — I saw a sorceress revealing her mysteries to a Bashi-Bazouk. This hag, who might have gone on as a witch in *Macbeth*, and been applauded for her capital make-up,—this lean and grinning ancient was crouching on all-fours, and studying a litter of shells, coins, buttons, broken glass, old nails, and other rubbish which she had just cast from her hand. Out of the chaos she spun a web of fate that made the lad who was involved in it fairly shiver with delight. Our dragoman said that, on the whole, her revelations were not very compromising. She foretold a series of ordinary adventures, terminating in a final return to the parental roof, where love and a full cup, and the usual accessories of the last act in life's comedy, awaited that Bashi-Bazouk—"Bless you, my children!" (Curtain.) A few idlers gathered about while the sor-

ceress groveled among her enchanted trinkets, and as the climax approached she threw her arms about, widening the circle that had closed in about her. I believe nothing of much importance was said concerning the Eastern question. That Bashi-Bazouk was one of a tribe who are called "crack-brained," for so the word may be literally translated; but he showed nothing of the reputed inhumanity that has made the name terrible in the mouths of Christians. Still, I believe that the Turks are so constituted, mentally, morally, religiously, physically, that in war-time, if you were to capture a Turk and behead him in the cause of science, you would discover that his body "wriggles until sunset."

Constantine the Great surrounded his city with a wall thirteen miles in length, having eight-and-twenty gates and many a lofty tower. These walls still stand, tottering, and are wonderfully picturesque. In parts of the old fortifications you can see the breaches made by catapults and battering rams. Of all the gates, there are no two alike, and each has something of its own that is either beautiful or interesting. One of the pleasantest excursions about the City of the Sultan is the exploration of the walls and towers. There are cemeteries by the way, and mosques and a

thousand *cafés*, to beguile you. You may float under the walls in a *caïque*, for their very foundations are laid in the sea, on one side of the city; you may ride, or drive, or walk; you may have a distant view of the Mosque of Eyoob, where the Osmanli sultans gird on the sword of Osman. Eyoob was the standard-bearer and companion-in-arms of the Prophet, and was killed at the siege of Constantinople by the Arabs, A. D. 668. Mohammed II. having had the tomb of Eyoob revealed to him in a vision, the mosque and mausoleum were erected on the spot. They are far too holy for a Christian to enter, even in his stocking-feet; which is rather a pity, inasmuch as this mosque is one of the most magnificent of the many near the capital.

At the Greek Church, buried in one of the cypress groves, there are some miraculous fish, red on one side and brown on the other. These fish were in the frying-pan, perfectly resigned to fate, when Constantinople was taken. That was a little too much, and they leaped out of the frying-pan, browned on one side only. If you don't believe it, inquire at the Greek Church, and see these precocious wrigglers, swimming about in the fountain as gaily as if they were not well-done on one side and raw on the other.

At the Seven Towers, where the treasury



THE SWEET WATERS.

was formerly kept, the walls are ponderous, and the interior of the court, which they enclose like some ancient garden, neglected and forlorn. There are stone stairways leading up to parapets, where the grass waves in the wind, and the poppies flutter their leaves like butterfly wings; where the huge, hollow towers are rent from top to bottom, but the vines that clasp them in their strong embrace keep the old fellows from falling. Trees force

their way out of the crevices, and the place is alive with lizards. As quiet as a country dooryard in the sunshine, this ancient fortress was once the scene of continual slaughter, and there is hardly a stone in it but might mark the grave of some victim of tyranny or treachery, whose blood has stained this soil.

In the Valley of Sweet Waters! It is a long drive from Pera over the dusty hills to the Vale of Sweet Waters; but on Friday afternoons the road is lined with carriages, and the groves on the banks of that pretty stream—the waters of which are worthily called sweet—resound to the music of many a mandolin and the gay laughter of women.

After mosque—the regular Friday duty of all Mussulmans is to say their prayers in state on that day—after prayers, the devout and the indifferent hasten to the Vale of the Sweet Waters, and give their souls to the luxury of life. The spectacle is both charming and unique; such a scene can only be imagined by the student of Eastern poetry; for it is one of the most joyous, brilliant, and picturesque that can be conceived of. It is a garden party, in carnival costume, held in the midst of green pastures, and beside still waters that rival those of the Vale of Cashmere.

As we drove into the mouth of the valley our road wound under luxuriant boughs dense with

black shadows; on one hand a narrow stream flowed noiselessly; one shore was a bed of moss, the other a wilderness of foliage, through which even the birds might find it difficult to pass. White swans sailed up and down the stream; yellow leaves floated upon it; its waters were so clear and so tranquil that they appeared, even in the shadow, like a deep river of amber.

Deep in the valley there is a summer palace of the sultan. You see it in the midst of velvet lawns, among cypresses, and mimosas, and fountains—a cage of white and gold, such as might house the birds of paradise. Musters of peacocks cover the lawns, and strut about with their fan-tails spread, as proud as any Turk in the land. Some of these decorative but unmusical birds were posing on the pedestals and urns that stand in the garden—a highly effective but rather theatrical display, for which the birds may be pardoned.

The stream broadens below the summer palace; the groves scatter themselves over the meadows on either side; a thousand *caiques* are in the water, crowding their way to and fro between the shores, laden with pleasure-seekers. The shores themselves absolutely swarm with women and children; it is their high holiday.

We enter one of the *caiques*, and seat our-

selves cautiously in the bottom of it; nothing can be more uncomfortable or more insecure than these tottering, flat-bottomed, ill-balanced boats. The oarsman sits with his back to the bow, and is obliged to throw an eye over his shoulder every five seconds to avoid the possibility of a collision, and with this double duty on his hands he is certainly excusable for an occasional disaster. We had our bow stove in, and were drawn on shore as speedily as possible, to avoid being crushed in the immense throng of *caïques* that choked the stream for two or three miles, and rendered a cruise in the sweet waters far from enjoyable.

On the shore were multitudes of women wrapped in silks and satins of the brightest colors, and seated upon rich Persian carpets spread under the trees. These women were generally in groups of three or more, and were attended by Nubian slaves, who also wore the *yashmack* upon their faces, though they were as black as ebony.

Bands of singers, dancers, instrumentalists, magicians, snake-charmers, and story-tellers wander up and down the shore, plying their trades and making the valley resound with the confusion of Babel. In every group the nargileh sent up its fragrant incense, and half the world seemed to be feeding upon honeyed fruits and drinking sherbet or *raki*. Doubtless

this latter liquor flowed freely, for the tumult increased as the afternoon waned.

There were tents pitched in the smaller groves, and from these more reserved circles came gushing laughter, and the click of glasses, and the pretty patter of applauding kids. The Harem really *does* enjoy itself on a Friday, even though that black giant of a eunuch is seated without the curtains of the tent.

The sojourner in Pera can touch the two extremes of Oriental enjoyment when he drifts over to Prinkipo of a sunny spring morning, and lounges in the semi-solitude of that slumberous isle, and when, weary of professional sight-seeing and of the hum of business in the Frank quarter of the town, he takes carriage or *caïque* and comes by land or sea to the Vale of the Sweet Waters, and enters for a moment into the spirit of the *fête*. Your practical Mohammedan goes hence to indulge his eyes with a vision of the joys to come; for is it not promised him who is faithful, a river and the flower of womanhood, together with meat and drink?

The Bridge of Boats! Somehow, one always gets back to the Bridge of Boats at the mouth of the Golden Horn, and perhaps there is nothing hereabout that is so delightful, and whose interest is so continuous. If the Styx



were bridged, one might expect to find it no more crowded than this thoroughfare; and I doubt if a more motley multitude could be gathered together, even though it were personally conducted by Charon. I know that the costumes are bewildering; that one need never go farther to look for faces or figures; that the Ark, when it grounded on Mount Ararat, and poured forth its miscellaneous crew, could hardly have surpassed this Bridge of Boats in the infinite variety of its species.

Men and beasts travel together here. The way is lined with those itinerant bazaars that spread themselves at your feet and beguile you; but the next moment they are rolled together again, and borne away on the shoulders of the merchant, who doesn't seem in the least in earnest when he asks you to purchase his wares.

The fire brigade of this inflammable city is better than nothing; for it shows a willingness on the part of the authorities to afford the populace a cheap and perfectly harmless amusement, but that is about as much as it is capable of.

Constantinople is always in flames; it has several times attracted the attention and the sympathy of the world, in consequence of the extent of its suffering. I had often wondered what means are taken to arrest the progress of

so dangerous an element in a community that is perfectly at the mercy of it. At last my curiosity was gratified. Lounging on the bridge one day—listening to the delightful chant of a pair of sherbet sellers, who went off every two minutes like a musical clock, and looking at the spectacular populace crowding to and fro—I heard an unusual commotion, and saw that a charge of half-naked infantry was cutting an avenue through the dense crowd. Then came five-and-twenty lusty fellows, who bore above their heads in triumph a small box—its size might have been two by four, and a couple of feet deep—with a garden hose-pump attached. If it were the Ark of the Covenant being hurried away to the mountains it could hardly have created more sensation in the bosom of the Constantinopolitan. The ten tribes leaped for joy; all the nations sang together. I joined the chorus, for it was impossible not to be infected by such universal enthusiasm.

On came another, and another, and yet another caravan, bearing its trophy aloft, and shouting the battle-cry of something which I was unable to interpret. It seemed to me that hundreds of these machines were hurried over the bridge. Some of them were returning at a moderate pace long before the procession was over. The companies saluted one another in

great glee, and the enthusiasm of the hour was in no wise abated.

At last I asked what was the meaning of this extraordinary demonstration. It might have been a race of the youths of Turkey; or happy souls bearing tribute to the happy sultan of the unhappy Empire; but it was not. It was only the fire department of Constantinople on active duty; and the wonder is that there is a sole survivor capable of telling the tale, or a solitary stone left standing upon a stone on the hills of the Bosphorus.

## XII.

### ST. SOPHIA.

Above the waters of the Golden Horn rise the thousand minarets of the mosques that are scattered everywhere through the length and breadth of the great city. More than a million souls are within call of the *muezzins*, who proclaim Mohammed the prophet of Allah, and prayer better than sleep.

In Stamboul the mosques are numerous, and three or four of them are marvels of picturesque architecture. Close to the *seraglio* there is a temple that seems not to have been made with hands; indeed, tradition attributes much of its beauty to the angels, under whose immediate direction it was reared.

Looking upon this superb structure, over the roofs of Stamboul, your eye is fixed in wonder and delight upon the nine domes heaped together one upon the other, like a cluster of huge bubbles, with the largest one floating at the top, where it seems to swim in the air and suspend the others. The minarets that spring from the four corners of the building are as slenderly and elegantly proportioned as waxen tapers, and the three galleries that girdle them

are as chaste and as significant as if they were jeweled rings betrothing earth and heaven. This miraculous mosque is Ἁγία Σοφία, the St. Sophia that fifteen centuries ago sprang into existence as if by magic, and was dedicated by the Emperor Constantine to the Divine Wisdom, the Word, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

Is there a temple under the sun whose history is more romantic, whose fate is more pitiful, whose future is more uncertain? Listen to the marvelous story of St. Sophia:

In the twentieth year of the reign of Constantine, A. D. 325—the same in which the Council of Nice was opened, and the foundations of the new city walls and palaces of Constantinople were laid—arose this Temple of Divine Wisdom. A hundred architects superintended it; under each architect were a hundred masons. An angel had appeared to the Emperor in a dream, and given orders as to the distribution of these artisans, and the nature of their work. Five thousand masons were placed upon the right side of the building and five thousand upon the left. The Emperor, dressed in coarse linen, his head bound with a cloth, and a stick in his hand, daily visited the workmen, and hastened the progress of the building by prizes and gifts.

The walls and arches were constructed of

brick, overlaid with the rarest marble, granite, and porphyry. Phrygian white marble, with rose-colored stripes; green marble from Laconica; blue marble from Libya; black Celtic marble, with white veins; Bosphorus marble, white, with black veins; Thessalian, Molossian, Proconnesian marble; Egyptian starred granite, and Saitic porphyry—all these were lavished upon the inner walls of the Temple. Antique columns were brought from the ruins of the most famous of the ancient temples, and wrought into the structure; columns of Isis and Osiris; pillars from the Temple of the Sun at Baalbek, of the Sun and Moon at Heliopolis and Ephesus; of Pallas at Athens; of Phœbus at Deles, and of Cybele at Cyzicus.

The mortar was made with barley-water, and the foundations were cemented with a mastic made of lime and barley-water. The chalk-white tiles from Rhodes that covered the arch of the cupolas bear the inscription: "God has founded it, and it will not be overthrown. God will support it in the blush of the dawn." These tiles were laid by twelves, and after each layer relics were built in, while the priests sang hymns and said prayers for the durability of the edifice and the prosperity of the Church.

When the question arose whether the light

should fall upon the high altar through one or two arched windows, the Emperor and the architects were in a hot dispute; but an angel appeared and directed that the light should fall through three windows, in honor of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The altar, more costly than gold, was to be composed of every precious material bedded together with gold and silver, incrustated with pearls and jewels. The tabernacle was a tower of gold, ornamented with golden lilies; and above it was a cross of gold adorned with precious stones, weighing five-and-seventy pounds. The throne of the Patriarch and the seven seats of the priests were of silver; about the altar were golden pillars, and by the pulpit stood a golden cross one hundred pounds in weight, glittering with carbuncles and pearls. The sacred vessels were of purest gold; there were 42,000 chalice-cloths worked in pearls and jewels. Four-and-twenty colossal books of the Evangelists, with golden covers, weighed each twenty hundredweight.

The gold in the vine-formed candelabra for the high altar, the pulpit, and the gallery for women, amounted to 6,000 hundredweight of the purest quality. There were two candelabra adorned with figures, all of gold, each weighing 111 pounds, and seven golden crosses of 100 pounds each. The doors were of ivory,

amber and cedar, the principal door of silver. Three doors were veneered with planks said to have been taken from the Ark of Noah.

Above the holy font in the church there were four trumpets blown by sculptured angels, supposed to be the very trumpets at whose blast the walls of Jericho were overthrown. The floor was to have been paved with gold, but the wise Justinian abandoned this idea, fearing that his successors might be tempted to dismantle the Temple. The floor was therefore of clouded marble, over which faint, waving lines imitated the advance of the sea; and from the four corners of the Temple these mimic waves flowed silently toward the four vestibules, in the manner of the four rivers of Paradise.

At the fountain of the priests twelve shells received the rain-water, and twelve lions, twelve leopards, and twelve does, spat it forth again.

An angel gave the plan and the name for the Temple. It remained for an angel to furnish part of the funds for its construction. When money was failing, though taxes were imposed upon the people of all classes, and even the salaries of the professors were applied to the building, this angel appeared and directed a train of mules into a subterranean vault, laded them with eighty hundredweight of gold, and delivered the same over to the Emperor.



Seven and a half years the artisans toiled upon the material as it slowly accumulated; eight and a half years the building grew, and when it was finished and furnished, on Christmas Eve, A. D. 548, the Emperor drove in state to St. Sophia, entered the church with the Patriarch Eutychius, ran swiftly from the portico to the pulpit, and with outstretched hands cried: "God be praised, who hath esteemed me worthy to complete such a work! Solomon, I have surpassed thee!"

One thousand oxen, one thousand sheep, six hundred deer, one thousand pigs, ten thousand cocks and hens were slaughtered, and, together with thirty thousand measures of corn, were distributed among the poor. On the following morning — Christmas Day — the church was formally opened, and the sacrifices and thanksgivings continued fourteen days — until the Epiphany.

What followed is scarcely less marvelous. Twice the Temple was destroyed by fire, and twice rebuilt; twice the great dome fell, and twice it was restored. The arches, having resounded to the music of Chrysostom's golden tongue, came at last to echo the blasphemies of the infidel and the groans of the wounded and dying. At the capture of Constantinople the clergy, the virgins dedicated to God, and a multitude of people of all classes crowded into

the church, and sought refuge before the high altar. Mohammed, at the head of the Osmanlis, rode into the sanctuary, forced his way through the affrighted throng, and leaping from his horse, at the altar, he cried: "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His prophet!" A hideous scene of slaughter followed, and the Temple was desecrated.

The sultans have despoiled it of its pictorial beauty; have added minarets and abutments to support the tottering southeast wall; have caused the rich frescoes to be plastered over with a yellowish substance; have chipped away, wherever it was possible, the carved symbol of the cross; have hung great disks, graven with the names of the four companions of the Prophet, over the seraphim under the dome, with their slender wings crossed above and below them and upon their breasts; while beneath the cupola is inscribed, in fantastic and beautiful characters, a line from the Koran: "God is the light of the heavens and of the earth."

As we entered the porch of St. Sophia, protected by our dragoman, we were gently but emphatically requested to put off our shoes. We could keep on our hats if we chose—you always wear them in a mosque—but we instinctively doffed our hat at the threshold of the ancient church, and entered it stocking-

footed, in solemn silence, bearing our shoes in one hand and our hat in the other.

The first impression we received was almost overpowering. The vastness and elegance of the interior, the solemnity and majesty of the decorations, the tranquillity that broods over all the place, fill one with religious awe. The seraphim fold their six great wings above you, and from the walls, from the marble galleries, from the shadow-filled cupolas a hundred vague forms gradually discover themselves—the ghosts of the saints and angels that once hallowed this lovely Temple. I know not how many crosses I traced in the mutilated sculpturing. The original cross is gone, but the chisel has left the form there as exact as ever.

There are Madonna faces that seem to exhale from the thick, dull plaster that has been laid over them. You see them; yet can hardly convince yourself that you see them, they are so like half-imagined pictures. In the apse—the hollow and naked apse that once sheltered the high altar—there is a shadow that haunts you; you turn to it again and again, and study it from every part of the building. By and by the shadow begins to take shape. It is a faint cloud that deepens in certain lights, and when you are at the exact angle, and the fortunate hour has come, you see it plainly enough—the sorrowful but forgiving countenance of the

Redeemer as it looks down upon the desolated and desecrated sanctuary.

The apse of St. Sophia is due east, the holy house of Mecca is southeast of Stamboul; therefore, as every Mussulman must pray with his face turned to Mecca, the Mihrab, or Mussulman altar, is erected in an angle of the mosque. At almost any hour of the day you find rows of the prayerful stretched cross-wise through the mosque, prostrating themselves on the rich carpets that cover the marble floor. Two flags, suspended near their pulpit, commemorate the triumph of Islam over Judaism and Christianity, of the Koran over the Old and New Testaments. There is a prayer-carpet of Mohammed—a very precious relic; a sweating column, the moisture of which is said to produce miraculous cures; a cold window, famous as productive of science, inasmuch as any one who sits in the draft thereof is sure to study with exceptional success. They show also among the relics of the mosque a small sarcophagus, which is called the Cradle of Our Lord; and a cup, or bowl, in which the Blessed Virgin is said to have bathed her Babe; but these traditions are purely Turkish.

While we wandered over the vast building, and were being besieged by Turks, who had handfuls of fragments from the mutilated

mosaics, and were eager to dispose of them at a bargain, I heard the murmur of voices in the mosque. Looking about me, I saw the wise men of the East seated upon fat cushions in the midst of a circle of youths, expounding the Koran, that lay open on a tiny table richly inlaid with pearl. In distant parts of the building there were singing-boys committing the Koran to memory. They were the acolytes of the mosque, and some of them had remarkably fine voices.

One little fellow who was seated in an enclosure under the gallery threw back his head and caroled like a lark. The Turkish chant has no more method in it than a lark's song. It is apparently the spontaneous expression of the singer, who voluntarily yields to every passion of the heart, and finds a pleasure in the distracting vagaries of his own delightful voice. We paused to listen. The youngster was rocking his body to and fro, and sending his delicious notes aloft like vocal sunbeams sparkling among the nine domes of the mosque. He stopped suddenly, like a bird in a cage, startled and curious; then stretched out his slender hand for alms; gave us a baby scowl that had something of inherited hate in it, and shut his small mouth with scorn. We passed on, and listened among the columns at a little distance. He stretched his neck and

stared after us; again began rocking to and fro; piped a little, chirped softly to himself, and then, with one daring flight, soared into the seventh heaven of melody, and floated there in an ecstasy of fanaticism.

### XIII.

#### ON THE BOSPORUS.

The bridge of boats that spans the Golden Horn is lined on the lower side with steamers plying between it and the sea islands, the Asiatic shore and the villages on the Bosphorus. It is our day for the Bosphorus. Antonio, a Greek, in whom we are gradually gaining confidence, leads our caravan forth in the fresh morning. We slide from Pera to Galata by the underground rail, in company with several opulent-looking Turks, who fill the close carriage with cigarette smoke during our brief transit. At Galata—that name signifies the abode of the Gauls—we pick our path through the busy streets, hasten half-way over the bridge of boats, and climb down ladders and over planks, and up ladders again on the other side, until we find ourselves safely ticketed for a day on a Bosphorus boat.

The mere fact that we are on board one of the five-and-twenty steamers of the *Shirket-i-Hairie* Company is delightful; neither can we read the name on the paddle-box, which adds greatly to our enjoyment of the voyage. It begins to feel as if we are really in Turkey—a

fact that is not to be accepted without some compunctions of conscience up yonder in that Frankified, hotel-haunted Pera.

Our steamer—not a bad one by any means—rapidly fills with the mixed races of the earth; the bridge is crowded from dawn to dark; a thin stream of tourists pours down the ladder onto our boat. I can see on either side of us other steamers, with steam up, and they are likewise being overrun with the strange-looking people, who drop out of the dense tide that ebbs to and fro. The wonder is that you and they are not swept on, and swallowed up in the strong current that seems never to decrease in volume or slacken its speed.

Our boat is a double-decker. In the bows the poorer classes, chiefly natives, travel at a reduced figure. Amidships there are cushioned seats, a comparatively clean deck, and the companion-way dropping into a cabin below, which is apparently a kind of refined black-hole, carefully avoided by everybody. In the stern there is a pen, hedged in by a low railing and a canvas curtain; and behind that veil the women of the harem bury themselves from the faces of men. We can see them, as much as we care to see of them, as they board us, and elbow their way through the throng of first-class passengers to their sanctuary; and we are just mean enough to look. The



*yashmack* that falls from the eyes to the waist is rather formidable; it were vain to search among its opaque folds for any shadow of the lips that have fed on *halva* and sherbet all their days; but the dark orbs are turned toward you, and the heavy lids that have been plastered with a white paste that lies upon them like fish-scales, and darkened with deep, broad lines of kohl—those soft but expressionless eyes look at you with stupid, animal curiosity, and the large, velvety pupils roll into the corners of the sockets as the *houri* passes by. Ah! she might sit for a face-card with those eyes of hers; the cow-like coquetry of the Queen of Hearts lurks under her sooty lashes.

The harem is so crowded before we swing off into the stream that the canvas partition bulges in spots like a huge dumpling. We regale ourselves with domestic pastries, such as the imagination of the untraveled foreigner may not conceive of; we eat oranges and drink sherbet, and watch the traffic of the bridge, until the paddle-wheels begin to beat the sea into a foam, and the last man has wrung his hands in despair—he wears a turban in this country, and his toes turn up like skates.

Drifting cautiously down to the mouth of the Golden Horn, picking our way among the shipping that is anchored in mid-stream, we turn away from the point of the *seraglio*, head due

north and find ourselves entering a river. This is the Bosphorus; it might as well be the Hudson, or any other winding stream that has green walls and is lovely to look upon, but for the peculiarly important relation it bears to the grand divisions of the earth's surface. It is, in fact, a brilliant geographical climax!

Just think of it for a moment. On our right the eastern shore is Asia; on our left, to the West, is Europe; at our back is the Sea of Marmora, and in two hours we shall have come to the waters of the Black Sea. The channel turns so abruptly at times that seven land-locked lakes are formed, each more charming than the last. Palaces, villas, villages line the delicious shores; the hills brood over the waters like hanging gardens of delight. I believe that the remarkable beauty of the Bosphorus is positively unequaled in the world; for Nature has made here a bed for Art to dream a dream in.

Behold two continents face to face, like rival queens, glassing themselves beside two classic seas. We are cruising between the Pontus and the Propontis, the Euxine and the Marmora. We swing from shore to shore, pause for a few moments at each landing, exchange passengers, and have ever about us a landscape that is renewed at every turn, and a surprise that is as fresh when we steam up the Golden Horn at

sunset as at the hour when we came out of it, with our hearts full of expectation and our mouths of exclamations.

The very names of the villages about us are appetizing; let me select only a part of them. Here in Europe we have the Hazelnut Village, the Crowded Garden, the Cradle Stone, the Dried Fountain, the Castle in Europe, the Place of Wailing, the Farm Village, the Yellow Place. Across the channel, in Asia, lie the Place of Labor, the Point of Quails, the Sultan's Village, the Fig Village, the Pipe Village, the Village of Blood, the Castle in Asia, the Heavenly Water, the Illuminated Village, the Weary Man's Village, the Chief of the Beys, and many other water-side hamlets nestling among chestnut groves and cypresses under the shelter of the hills.

With these shores is associated the romantic history of Barbarossa, of Dandolo and his Venetian galleys. Here, at the village of the Dried Fountain, stood the laurel tree Medea planted when she returned from Colchis with the adventurous Jason; and here Constantine erected a church (what a church-builder he was!) to the Archangel Michael; and by this church stood the column on which St. Simeon, the stylite, watched and prayed between heaven and earth; and St. Daniel, the stylite, followed him. In yonder valley are seven

plane trees, under which Godfrey de Bouillon encamped with his crusaders in 1096. Some writers question this tradition, but what is gained by disbelief when the evidences are in favor of the tradition? To begin with, there are the trees; I defy you to disprove it! What a tramp we had through a queer village, and off into the soft, green meadows, just to pat those old trees on their shaggy barks, and tell them that we believe in them, spite of Murray and his apostles, and that it is sure to be all right in the end!

There is a tree in the Vale of Roses, near Kirej-Boornoo—that gorgeous word means nothing less practical than Lime Point—there is a tree there on the bark of which a shawl merchant from Ispahan has left his mark. The sales were light that day, and the poor fellow had carried a bale of splendid fabrics about in the hot sun until his heart fainted within him, and he dropped into verse. Then the merchant from Ispahan cut his sonnet on the bark of the tree, and you may read to-day, with the aid of your dragoman, how the bodies of the merchants of Ispahan are indeed perishable, but that the song of the singer endureth forever. A pretty and a commendable sentiment for a merchant to express, and he has expressed it in rare Persian characters as lovely as one of his own shawl patterns.

Everywhere on the Bosphorus there are groves and gardens and lawns. At Belgrade, thirteen miles north of Constantinople, the woods are sacred, and the ax is never laid to their roots; nor are the fountains suffered to run dry in that blessed land. It was at Belgrade that Lady Mary Wortley Montague lived and wrote her letters. In the yellow valley, near the Cape of the Tombs, the fishermen, skippers, and gardeners have made an earthly paradise. When Murad IV. saw one of these gardens he exclaimed: "I, the servant of the two noblest harems [of Mecca and Medina], possess no such gardens as this!" And the very next day the price of vegetables went up.

But the Valley of the Heavenly Waters is the most famous of all these celestial haunts. The Eastern poets have preferred it to the four jewels of Asia—the Plains of Damascus and Sogd, the Meadows of Obolla, near Basora, and the Persian valley of Shaab Bewan. There is some slight consolation in the thought that this enchanted glen is without a rival in all the lands of the Orient; yet it is only slight. Truly we are in Turkey; but it is only Turkey, after all. Why are we not in Persia? What is Stamboul to the bazaars of Bagdad!

We cross the Bosphorus in a *caïque*, and climb the steep slopes of the Giant Mountain in Asia. What went we up for to see? Two continents

and two seas, and such a chain of lakes, and hill upon hill overhanging a score of valleys,—valleys filled with vines and fruits and flowers. Yonder is the Euxine. Turn to your Byron and read:

The wind swept down the Euxine, and the wave  
 Broke foaming o'er the blue Symplegades.  
 'Tis a grand sight from off the Giant's Cave  
 To watch the progress of those rolling seas  
 Between the Bosphorus, as they lash and lave  
 Europe and Asia, you being quite at ease.  
 There's not a sea the passenger e'er pukes in  
 Turns up more dangerous breakers than the Euxine.

Down there at the mouth of the Bosphorus lie the Symplegades, through which Jason steered his Argonauts. I fancy a dove might pass them in safety on a day like this. It is quite evident that they don't butt one another so much as they used to. Probably there are no more Golden Fleeces in Colchis, and not so many adventurers as of yore.

On this Giant Mountain there is a small monastery, wherein live two Turkish dervishes, who guard the grave of Joshua. An open cellar, twenty feet in length and five in breadth, planted with flowers and shrubs, is shown as the grave; a classical story points to the same as the tomb of Amycus, King of the Bebrycians, who was slain by Pollux. In either case we are happy in our pilgrimage; so are a dozen Turkish women shrouded in

voluminous folds of white linen, who have come hither to eat sweetmeats all day long on the breezy mountain-top. This harem was dragged up the mountain road in a chariot of scarlet and gold, looking like a small band-wagon in a cheap circus. The gray oxen, loosed from the vehicle, fed in the neighborhood of Joshua's grave, and didn't seem to care much about the Eastern question, though it is one that concerns them personally.

Down the stream; back again over the same course; seeing everything in a new light, and liking it better than ever; through the arbor of the Raving Laurel—the leaves of that tree turn the brain of him who plucks them; past the port of the Manslayer; threading the ideal shores where ancient palaces are falling to decay, and quaint old houses are toppling into the water; where huge ships lie close to the shore, and tower above the tiny villages that are built upon the edge of the very last sea-wave, and seem to rise and fall with the tide; where water-side *cafés* are thronged with dreamers slumbering in clouds of smoke; where ten thousand *caïques* rock upon the tide, and threaten to turn over every moment, and where the land and the sea are so wedded that the sea seems to have clasped her arms over the neck of the land, and the embrace is called the Bosphorus.

In the great white palaces of the solemn sultan, where the caged windows shut in the hothouse flowers of Georgia and Circassia, I saw the sea-gulls soaring under the eaves, and a moment later—at sunset—we entered the Golden Horn, which was like a lake of flame flooding a fairy city built of crystal and pearl and gold.



## XIV.

### PRINKIPO.

The Islands of the Blessed! Off in the Sea of Marmora, on a spring morning, the eye discovers a little wreath of islands, floating, apparently, cloud-like in mid-air. These fairy islands, nine in number, are frequented by the wealthy Constantinopolitans, who seek repose in the lonely and lovely valleys, where the sun seems to shine forever; where the harshest sound that falls upon the ear is the silvery ring of steel as the husbandman sharpens his scythe in the meadow, or the chorus of fisher-boys singing over their nets on the shore.

It is but an hour and a half's sail from the Golden Horn to Prinkipo, the chief island of the group; yet, once beyond the contagious hurry of the city, you find yourself sinking comfortably into one of the easy-chairs on deck, inhaling the delicious sea-air, and absorbing the sunshine with genuine physical delight. I do not wonder that emperors and empresses have fled to these sea islands for repose and for security. It seems as if nothing worldly ought to touch their shores; and, indeed, the steamer that runs over and back

across the sea, morning and evening, is the only suggestion of an earnest and vigorous life.

We set sail in the morning, and find ourselves almost immediately under the enchanting influence of the new atmosphere. The ripples sparkle in the sun; a few seabirds wheel on lazy wing and bear us company; now and again a fish leaps from the water; the white gulls scream and dart upon it; there is a splash in the track of the sun where the sea is paved with gold, and we rouse ourselves from a reverie as deep almost as the sea. Nothing comes of it; we fall upon a basket of fruit and launch a fleet of orange-peel *caiques* in our wake; we roll the famed tobacco of the land in wrappers of rice-paper, and sweeten the air with the aroma thereof. No one talks much; every one seems to be looking with contented eyes into the future or the past.

We swing up to a shallow shore, under green hills, where a narrow dock reaches far out into the deep water. This is Khalki, one of the fairest islands of the group; but we don't land here to-day. We lean over the rail, and see the rope thrown lazily ashore, and as lazily caught and slipped over the one post on the dock. Somebody goes on shore very quietly, some other body steps noiselessly on board; we are cast off without comment, and so drift on toward Prinkipo.

We see the three grassy hills of Khalki, crowned with the convents of the Blessed Virgin, St. George, and the Holy Trinity. We learn that there are students there—Greeks, many of them; that there is also an Ottoman naval college over the hill, and that Khalki is much resorted to by the *rayahs*—the non-Mussulman subjects of the sultan. It seems to us that nothing can be finer than to be a *rayah* and a student, and to lie all day on those green, green slopes, looking off upon the sparkling sea, and listening to the study-bell growing ever fainter and fainter as we fall asleep, lapped in a meadow of sweet clover.

Prinkipo is the largest of the Prince's Islands. It has its village and its hotels, with baths along the shore just under them. A high road, in capital repair, makes the circuit of the island; a swarm of donkey-boys light upon you as you come to land; and it were vain to waive them back or seek to fly from them, for they will track you to the grave or get their fee.

The summer village—a colony of play-houses—is so neat, so pretty, so untroubled! Wreaths of flowers hang over the doors and the windows of almost every house. So they welcome the return of spring in Prinkipo. Stately Turks are borne up and down the village streets in sedan-chairs. Pipe-bearers fol-

low them, and from time to time, as the pompous *effendi* waves his hand, his box is turned toward the sea in a shady spot; the stalwart carriers dash the sweat from their foreheads, and squat at the feet of their master; the pipe-boy uncoils the pliant tube, lays a live coal upon the bowl of the nargileh as it sits in the grass, and the next half-hour is given to serene and secret thoughts. A prince in the Isle of Princes is a man to put your faith in; you will always know just where to look for him, and you may be sure that he takes no interest in the affairs of other men, and that nothing can disturb the placidity of his life—unless the bottom should suddenly drop out of his sedan-chair.

We hired a set of donkey-boys to walk behind us at a respectful distance. Alone we did it,—one after the other, idling here and there, getting astray in the vineyards, hiding among rose-gardens, pausing to inhale the warm odors steeping in the sun, or to catch the refrain of some singer buried in the wood on the hill.

There is a Greek convent above the road, hidden like a nest in a deep hollow. When the Empress Irene, a contemporary of Charlemagne and Haroun-al-Raschid, was dethroned, she was robbed of all the treasures of the crown, and then banished to this convent, which herself had built. Later she was sent

to Lemnos, and there died; but her body was brought hither, and is still treasured in this convent. When the conquerors of Constantinople scattered the dust of the Byzantine emperors to the winds, the sarcophagus of Irene alone escaped destruction.

High on a summit of a peak in Prinkipo there is a cloister and a kitchen. Our path lay through a fragrant forest; we caught glimpses of broad blue seas and of islands that swam below us as we climbed toward the summit of the peak. Here, in an arbor that hung upon the edge of space, a monk served us bread and wine and omelet. He also brought the consoling nargileh, and as we feasted and fattened we looked down upon a picture that can never fade from memory.

If ever island floated, these islands float. They are the haunts of flying islanders, and that is why the air is so still and so restful and so magical. On the one hand, the sea and sky lie down together, and on the other the glamour of Stamboul illuminates the horizon like a mirage. In the distance we discover the little boat returning for us. She sits like a bird upon the water, with foam-white tail-feathers and long, dark wings of smoke. Think of saying farewell to these dream-nooks of the world—think of plunging again into new fields, with the consciousness that you have, in all

human probability, seen the best, and that one experience laid so soon upon another is sure to deaden the flavor of both!

Like sea-flowers, the islands seem to drift away from us, and in secret I am half convinced that yonder, between sea and sky, lies Avalon; and yonder, within the magic circle of the waves, sleep the Happy Isles, the Islands of the Blessed!

Chrysopolis! As the day is uncommonly fair we take a run over to Asia. There is something appetizing in the thought of picnicking on another continent, and getting back before sundown, so we hasten to that famous Bridge of Boats. All the steamers start from it, and we select our line with some caution; for it would not be difficult to go astray in the confusion that floods this thoroughfare from dawn to dusk.

We steam directly across the Bosphorus to the Asiatic coast—that point of land was called the Bosphorus (the Boss-ford); for it was just here that Io, transformed into a cow, swam over from the opposite shore. A rock in the middle passage, crowned with a beacon-tower, is called the Tower of Leander. Now, Leander swam the Hellespont, and not the Bosphorus; but the Turkish tale that hangs thereby is more popular. Sultan Mahmoud imprisoned one of his mistresses in the White

Tower. For this reason the Turks still know it as *Kis-Koulissi*—the Tower of the Maiden.

Scutari, which is quite a city by itself, though reckoned a suburb of Constantinople, is of the ancient Persian origin. It was called Chrysopolis (the Golden City), perhaps because the Attic commanders used to levy a toll of one-tenth on all the vessels and goods passing by from the Euxine—so says Xenophon, and he ought to know; for he and his Greek auxiliaries made a seven days' halt at Chrysopolis on their return from the campaign against Cyrus, and they here disposed of their booty. Xenophon wouldn't know the place now: the walls are down, and a crowd of hackmen await the arrival of the hourly ferry, each man eager to secure a passenger for the great cemeteries, or the Hill of Boolgoorloo.

Boolgoorloo! We pick our carriage and drive leisurely through the pretty town. Ox teams stop the way from time to time; the barbers sit under the trees shaving the native youth—young fellows who seem to relish this public proof of their claim to manhood. Fruit-sellers cry after us, and we are tempted to fill our laps with cherries and strawberries; for it is a long pull to the top of Boolgoorloo. We drive as far as we can, leave the town behind us, and are charmed with the handsome villas of the wealthy Moslems. Some of them have

their own little mosques, and a private minaret, not much larger than a smokestack. We pass through villages with great fountains at the corners of the streets, where dervishes—the Mohammedan monks—dip water and offer it to the thirsty, who await their turn with amiable resignation.

By and by the road tips up at such an uncomfortable angle that we are glad to descend from the trap and foot it to the hill-top. The hill itself can boast little but a name; that name, Boolgoorloo, is not to be sneezed at. I wonder what it means? There is a diminutive convent a-top of it, with a couple of dervishes, who beguile the strangers into a kitchen-garden, and then offer them a bouquet of gilly-flowers, and demand a *back-sheesh* in return. A grave in this garden is said to date from the days of Constantine. As it is simply a hole in the ground, the statement seems not improbable—the hill is much older than that.

The ladies of all lands flock to Boolgoorloo and eat strawberries. They look at the graves in the convent garden, and some of them erect little sticks with a strip of rag at half-mast, which is a sure cure for toothache and the like. They wander among the heather, that is fresh and hardy and fragrant; then they turn about on their heels and take in pano-



ramic slices of the landscape, and finally go home with their hearts full of satisfaction and their arms full of flowers.

But why call up that magical city over the sea? It is very splendid to look upon; and yonder is Olympus—the snowy Olympus of Homer and of all the gods. It looks down upon Stamboul and the Euxine, and over upon the desolate plain of Troy, and has a thousand storied islands at its feet; a great white throne is Olympus, but the gods storm about it no longer, wrought to divine fury. As it was once their garden, it is now their grave—an immeasurable pyramid of snow!

The ancient emperors had hunting palaces on the slopes of Boolgoorloo, and down yonder at the sea's edge is Kedi-Keni, where stood the temple of the gods; and there also was a palace and a villa of Belisarius, who ended his days in the tranquil enjoyment of his dividends, and was not a vagrant with no visible means of support, as has been slanderously stated.

At the base of Boolgoorloo there is a black sea of cypresses. The wind that sweeps over it awakens a deep murmur that is as the sound of many waters. This is the great Turkish cemetery of Scutari. It is said that the entire population of Constantinople does not exceed a twentieth part of the dead that sleep under

those cypresses. It is a wilderness of trees, set so close together that their branches are matted overhead, and scarcely a ray of sunlight penetrates them. Carriage roads wind through the melancholy wood. But for these dimly-lighted avenues one might easily get lost among the millions of stumbling-blocks that mark the graves beneath.

Your Turkish grave is fantastical. When it is fresh and green it glories in a monument like a hitching-post—round, high shouldered, with a cap over all, and is brilliant in red or green paint. You will know the male from the female by the knob on it. Your male in death, even as in life, never takes his fez off; the fezless one is a woman; the half-length is a boy; they lie side by side, never two in a grave, never put down in layers as in England and other Christian countries.

I have seen the Turk in his pride spit at "the dog of a Christian" who was wandering about, stocking-footed, through a mosque,—a mosque that was once a church of God, and not of the Prophet. I have seen that portly Moslem laid low in his grave at Scutari, and a post driven over his head,—a post of such magnificence that in form and feature it was not unlike a gigantic *schnapps* bottle overlaid with gold. His friends came and took coffee under the shadow of his monument, and the

world wagged well; but by and by love that perisheth away took coffee up-town. The tough thistle sprang from the bones of the Turk, and the dust that covered that sepulchre was never again disturbed.

It seems strange to find the Turks so fond of the shadow of death—if I may so call the gloomy groves of Scutari—and yet so neglectful of their dead. They will swarm to the cemetery and spend the whole day in eating, drinking, and smoking—reveling in the midst of the tombs. They will invite one another from grave to grave, and present coffee and pipes in the most festive manner. Indeed, you have only to knock at a headstone, and you are sure of a warm welcome. But they will not pluck the rank weeds that flourish in that fattening soil, nor set up the monument that staggers and is a shame to them; they will not even turn out the jack or jenny that stands knee-deep in the loam, and rubs an ear against the wooden fez of the late head of the family.

All through the dark valley there are small *cafés*, thronged with weary pilgrims, who thus cheer their solitary journey to the tomb. There are strolling minstrels also, who entertain the mourners with the poems of Hafiz, and dancers with a dance of death that gives delight to the living.

Beggars line the way—Turkish atrocities not

easily to be recognized as human. I saw three blind men sitting in a row, shoulder to shoulder; their legs were crossed in the dust of the roadside; their hands were raised in supplication, and their heads lolled upon their shoulders as they rocked their bodies to and fro, and sang a pitiful *terzo*. A dish in front of them received from time to time a small tribute of copper; but the old men sang on, oblivious of the idlers who lingered near them, oblivious of all things earthly—if their withered faces did not belie them. Again I could think only of those blinded quail who pipe night and day in their cages, and at whose call the free birds gather—but who knows of what the blind quail in his cage is singing?

There is one tomb at Scutari that is more splendid than all the others. A canopy, supported by six columns, covers it, and beneath it lie the remains of Sultan Mahmoud's favorite mare.

When the coffee is cold and the pipes stale we turn from the dusky valleys of cypress, and, as the desolation of the place grows more and more oppressive, I am reminded of the Ottoman curse, which seems to have been fulfilled to the uttermost in this populous city of mortality—you remember it?—"May jackasses bray on the graves of your ancestors!"

Not far away is another burial-ground, vastly

different in all particulars. It is open to the sunshine—a green lawn sloping to the sea, and planted with roses and willows and the yew. The white stones glisten among the foliage; everything is as trim and tidy and decent-looking as one wishes it to be. There are costly tombs and modest ones, and in the centre is a memorial column with sculptured angels supporting it; but there is a billowy waste of green mounds with no stones to tell their tale, and there sleep 8,000 nameless dead who died for England in that terrible Crimean War.

There are rows of graves with simple headstones, on which are recorded a few lines full of agony. You read again and again these inscriptions in memory of young officers, with ages ranging from eighteen to twenty-eight years, who bravely fell at this or that battle, or wasted in the hospital, or who died at sea. These stones are usually “erected by his comrades,” and they all lie within sight of that hospital, now a barrack, where Florence Nightingale did her labor of love.

The waning light of the afternoon sleeps on that hallowed slope; the waves sing below it. The islands hang like clouds upon the face of the waters, and Stamboul unveils her splendor, which is mirrored in the tranquil sea. Turning from all this sensuous beauty, my eye falls upon a solitary slab; it bears in bold

relief an inscription that takes me by storm. I think of the flower of England, young, brave, impetuous, hurled upon the fire of the enemy and ignominiously sacrificed; and I read again that last appeal of one of those ill-fated lads, and I believe that such a prayer will not pass unheeded—it is only this: “I am Thine—save me!”

## XV.

### THE SULTAN GOES TO MOSQUE.

"The Shadow of God!" It is high noon of a Friday, the Sabbath of the Turks. The Sultan goes to mosque at twelve sharp; but as yet (five minutes before the hour) we are unable to ascertain whether he goes by sea or land, or which of the royal mosques he deigns to honor with his august visitation. The Sultan is the Pope of the Mohammedans; he is the head and front of their faith, and when they take up arms in his defense they are fighting the good fight. It is a religious war, in which the poor fellows will perish with enthusiasm; for they also believe that the soul of every one who falls in battle is translated immediately to the seventh heaven of eternal bliss.

We are informed that His Awful Highness never decides until the last moment which mosque he will visit. This is partly caprice, partly a precaution; for who knows at what moment some mad wag may send a charmed bullet whizzing through the imperial brain? If you would see "The Shadow of God"—the successor of Mohammed—set forth on his

weekly visitation, you must secure your carriage, drive to the gates of the favorite palace on the Bosphorus, and there await the moment when the "Shadow" mounts his superb steed, and rides away, surrounded by a small army; or follow the royal barge, and reach the mosque by land in season to see him arrive by water.

For a whole hour we sat under the shade of the trees in front of the palace; a thousand troops were lounging in easy attitudes, exchanging slang and small talk with the swarms of beggars that infested the place. A large number of high officials rode to and fro in raiment that would make the fortune of any manager who could reproduce it in some Eastern extravaganza. The horses, of pure Arabian blood, seemed mad with vanity, and were as coquettish and affected as young girls. The harem was well represented. A line of handsome broughams manned with eunuchs, if I may be allowed the expression, passed up and down the avenue, displaying the highly artificial loveliness of the Circassian and Georgian *houris*, who are the wives of the Sultan. This is as near a view as they ever get of the great world about them, and with what eyes they look upon it—these beautiful odalisques!

We recognized all our steamer friends, and



caught glimpses of faces that we had grown familiar with in other ports, but had missed for many a day. All the world comes forth to gaze when the Sultan goes to mosque.

As the hour of noon drew near there was a noticeable tremor of anticipation everywhere visible. Even the swarthy infantry—rough-looking fellows they are—grew impatient, and turned again and again toward the palace gates, where the dignitaries of the court were stationed. The avenue was cleared of pedestrians and vehicles—or rather a way was opened through the centre—and we were suffered to sit in our high carriage at the roadside in the best possible position. The retinue that awaited the arrival of His Majesty was composed of the handsomest, haughtiest, and most distinguished-looking gentlemen that can be imagined. The spectacle was, of course, highly theatrical, but none the less interesting or agreeable for that reason.

The excitement increased. Suddenly, in the midst of it, the officials who had been waiting at the palace gates, where also the Sultan's charger, superbly caparisoned, was led to and fro,—suddenly and without a moment's warning the soldiers presented arms, and then the officials dashed up the street, followed by the harem and the mob, or so much of it as was on wheels, and capable of keeping pace with the

flying officials. The army retreated, the avenues were deserted in a very few moments; for the Sultan had gone to mosque by water.

The carriages of the harem were our only guides. We got in their wake, and drove rapidly through narrow, crooked and ill-paved streets, following the shores of the Bosphorus, but unable to get even a glimpse of it. Having come at last to the water's edge, our dragoman hastened to conduct us into an upper chamber of a Greek *café*, where we had a row of windows opening upon the Bosphorus, and bearing directly upon the quay of the mosque not a stone's throw from us.

We were singularly fortunate; for below us, as far as the eye could see, the crowd grew denser every moment, and many a foreign face was recognizable by reason of its agonized and despairing expression. Coffee and pipes were brought, not forgetting the glass of rose-water, with which we at first moistened our lips. Meanwhile, the officials passed into the quay, and stood in a long line against the façade of the mosque. They were all in European dress, with the exception of the fez, and looked, as they stood there shoulder to shoulder, not unlike an overgrown military school on drill.

A *caïque* shortly arrived with the royal properties. Splendid Persian carpets were

unrolled, reaching from the steps at the water's edge across the quay into the mosque; others—the prayer-carpet, etc.,—were taken within the mosque. *Caiques* began to drift in from the Bosphorus, but they were kept at a respectful distance by the water police. A band of instruments stationed itself under our windows, and awaited the arrival of His Mightiness.

Then the thunder of cannon was heard rolling over the water. The six ironclads that were lying abreast of the palace were covered with flags, the yards were manned, and as the royal *caïque* swept under them, the great guns belched forth their avalanches of smoke and fury, and the crews of the warships one after another rent the air with lusty cheers. It was extremely exciting; I felt the little shivers running up and down my spine.

The *caïques*, as we saw them down the Bosphorus, looked like huge sea-birds flying low, with wings just dipping in the water. In the centre the royal barge of white and gold flashed gloriously in the sunshine. It was followed by the barge of the Sultan's eldest son. The chief officers of the royal family surrounded the state barges with their smaller *caïques*. The band struck up under our window; the wild, fanatical Turkish music is calculated to goad one to frenzy; there is

something devilish in it, and therefore something fascinating. Two of the band men held each aloft a pole, on the top of which was a crescent and a multitude of scarlet tassels and brazen bells, and these were whirled dizzily round and round so long as the music lasted.

With the thunder of cannon, and the chorus of cheers from the last of the ironclads, came the magnificent Sultan to mosque. His gilded *caïque*, a hundred feet in length, was as graceful as an ostrich feather. Under a canopy of scarlet velvet, spangled and heavily fringed with gold, the Sultan sat like an idol; and at his feet, with their hands spread palms down upon their knees, and their heads bowed low, knelt the Vizier and Grand-Vizier in silent adoration. Six-and-twenty picked rowers—men as lithe as serpents and as agile as panthers, clad in white, and moving with marvelous precision—plunged upon their golden oars.

These wonderful oarsmen actually went down upon their knees, and made a profound obeisance before their lord and master, at the same moment throwing their oar-blades high into the air; then, with a tremendous sweep they sprang up and struck their oars into the sea, while the tips flashed in an arch of flame. Recovering themselves, the graceful oarsmen crept forward, crouching like wild beasts on the alert, fairly groveling at the feet of the

Sultan. It was altogether a very extraordinary performance, and the great barge shot forward with astonishing rapidity, and swam up to the steps of the mosque in the most brilliant and effective manner.

When the barge touched the quay, the officials who awaited His Supreme Highness stooped, took the dust at the feet of the Sultan, kissed it, touched it to their foreheads and their breasts. The dust was, of course, invisible, but the ceremonial was significant. As the royal foot was placed upon the steps, the dignitaries touched their foreheads to the ground and showed every mark of humility. His Terrific Mightiness passed haughtily into the mosque, and the spectacle was suspended. Not the slightest notice was taken of the son and heir to the throne; for in this wise the supreme glory due to the father might be lessened.

Everybody was at liberty to do as he pleased. We became exceedingly democratic, and were admitted to a private inspection of the royal barges. Before the royal party had arrived at the mosque, orders came from some official near us that the windows of our *café* must be closed. We were obliged to comply, though most reluctantly, since it was an affair in which our safety and the security of our host depended; but we were reckless enough to

throw up the window at the last moment, when all attention was directed toward the Sultan, and so we lost nothing but a little fresh air through the fear or fanaticism of the authorities. We could not ascertain the real cause of this interference with our comfort and pleasure, but were told it was probably because it is not safe, or was not, for Abdul-Aziz to appear in public; and every precaution was taken to keep the route of his journeys to the mosque a secret, as well as to have an eye upon the windows and housetops in the vicinity, lest he might be shot from some ambuscade.

After the procession had returned from the mosque on the occasion of which I write, the Sultan repaired to his palace, and three days later the unhappy wretch lay in the royal chamber drowned in his own blood! When the Sultan went to mosque that day he said the last prayer of his life, and the son that followed him was scarcely more fortunate than his miserable and miserly sire.

The last farewell! From the lofty tower of Galata I had my last view of the City of the Sultan. Galata was settled early in the thirteenth century, by a Genoese colony. The Genoese were allowed to throw a wall about it, and to govern it by the laws of the republic. They built a high tower in the midst of it, and

looked out upon the world with so much of pride that, of course, they had their fall. The walls went down with them. The great tower alone remains, and from its lofty summit a watch is continually on the lookout for smoke; this is the fire-alarm that floats from the flag-staff overhead—a silent and ineffectual signal.

There is a *café* in the top of the tower. You sit in the deep windows thereof and look over into Asia, with all Europe at your back. Beneath you thousands of Christians have been martyred for Christ's sake. There are a dozen churches—Greek and Latin—that have been turned into mosques. To-day, at any moment, if the Moslem fanatics were to rise, they could without difficulty sweep all the unbelievers from the face of this part of the earth.

You think of this as your eye scans the ravishing picture. You float like a dove over the enchanting city. You note the points with which you have grown familiar—the deep shadows of the funereal cypresses; the crescents that sparkle in the sunshine from the peaks of slender minarets; the golden flood that divides the city, and yet clasps it in a warm embrace; the sea beyond, and the sea islands.

The mists of the evening gather at sunset; a luminous haze is spread over the bewildering landscape, and it is more fairy-like and unreal than ever. You look across the world, and

pass from hill to hill, on to the remote horizon; and there, over against the sunset, across the broad disc of splendid fire, you see the dark outlines of a fort, one of the chief strongholds of Constantinople; and out of the midst of cannon and shot and shell springs the sharp, spear-like minaret.

You will find that these Turks are always backed by their religion. I believe there is no exception to this rule. Every soldier of the Sultan carries a mosque in his own heart, and the bullet that pierces that heart opens the gates of Paradise to the late Bashi-Bazouk. I thought of this with a slight chill, and was glad when they said unto me, "Let us arise and go hence."



## XVI.

### OUT OF THE EAST.

Homeward bound! The very same ship that brought us over has been lying in the mouth of the Golden Horn all these eventful days. We board her, a half-dozen of us, and are warmly greeted by the officers and welcomed by every soul on board. How wholesome a thing is a little show of fellowship in a strange and far-away land! I look for my old stateroom, and find it just as I left it, secured to me by the steward, who is at my elbow, oddly enough, and who receives a tip, which makes us both smile blandly.

We are much scattered—I mean the company of the last sea-voyage. Some have gone up the Danube, some to Greece. The Eton boy, the life of the ship, has returned to the scenes of his early triumphs, and we mourn over him as the only piece of unaffected humanity that it has been our lot to meet with in the East. In the evening we steam through the Dardanelles, and are rather glad that it looks black and stormy. We hear the gods growling on distant Olympus; we see the green and red lights on shore; pass ghostly

ships without exchanging greetings of any sort; and, in truth, the Hellespont to-night seems haunted by fleets of "Flying Dutchmen."

Leaves from a log! Windy and rough all day; dreary, barren islands lie about us, but no one cares to look at them a second time. It is hard to believe that these desolate rocks are the landmarks of the Iliad, the same that interested us so deeply when we first sighted them. Can it be possible that all Oriental experiences are like the first breath of a perfume, or the first bite of a fruit, never to be repeated successfully?

At 7.00 p. m. we arrive at Syra. If the captain were to come down the deck shouting, "Syra; change boats for Piræus and Athens!" it would not seem at all out of place. All romance seems to have evaporated, now that travel is so easy and so universal. The daily trains for Jerusalem will start in a little while, and already you can go up the Nile by rail for hundreds of miles.

Our family circle is again broken. In the delicious dusk we wave adieu over the delicious sea, and an hour later we are hurried out of sight and hearing in the tranquil night. The day following we hug the Greek coast, or pick our way among the isles of Greece, and wonder what Byron found in them to estrange his

heart from England. The mountains are fine enough, but much of the land is as monotonous as the sea itself. As for the poetry and the politics of the people, I have nothing to say of them.

Corfu! At 2.00 p.m. to-day (the third out of Constantinople) we drew into the picturesque harbor of Corfu. Here, the headquarters of the Ionian Islands, five-and-twenty thousand inhabitants live a semi-pastoral life—yachting, hunting, and boring time to death. The chief fort of the harbor, behind which the city tries to hide itself, is as pretty as a cork model. Indeed, it looks more like a terraced garden, with its sloping lawns, its cypresses, and ornamental batteries, than anything less pleasurable.

How odd it seems when we think that the Corinthians colonized here, B. C. 734; that their increasing power was one of the chief causes of the Peloponnesian war; that the Venetians held the island in the Middle Ages—you can see maps and models of it in the Arsenal at Venice; that the English ruled it from 1818 to 1863, when they ceded it to the Greeks! And yet to-day it seems like the least harmful of watering-places—a mere summer resort, tranquil to the verge of stupidity. But there are other associations that must not be forgotten. That humped island under the

tableland of Kanoni, the islet Pondikonissi, is the Phœnician ship that brought Ulysses to Ithaca, and was turned to stone. At the mouth of a brook near at hand is the spot where Ulysses was cast ashore, and where he met the Princess Nausicaa, as related in Book VI. of the *Odyssey*. Those are the Albanian Mountains yonder, and here are some pure Greeks just boarding us, ticketed for Triest. The lady, very slender and not bad-looking, has stilts on her slippers; her son is of the color of licorice water, and not a bad type of the degenerate race. We are overrun with these Greeks; their language is heard in every part of the ship. It sounds like a fair imitation of the ancient tongue. Much respect is paid a Greek bishop, who lounges in the easiest chair on deck, and plays with his beads from morning till night.

Up the Adriatic! Rounding a point of Albania, we enter the Adriatic, and find it brighter, bluer and more tranquil than the sea of yesterday. The Dalmatian Islands lie on the one hand, misty mountains upon the other. We have been talking of Montenegro, sailing under its shadow, and of the troublesome days that multiply as we steam onward toward Triest. It is a time for meditation on the past; and as I recall my experiences in the East, I am surprised to find how little there is

that one cares to forget, or can afford to, either. There are hours that bore you, many of them, and people who are an annoyance; but how easy it is to forgive a negative injury when the cause is removed! It is like physical pain: forgotten as soon as it ceases.

Triest! All the glorious morning we skirt the olive-clad coast of Istria, counting the white villages on our fingers. Fleets of scarlet and orange-tinted sails are on the sea, a foretaste of the Venetian lagoon. Triest, backed by splendid hills, rises before us, and we drop anchor in the cosy and well-filled harbor at the end of a prosperous voyage.

My first expedition was to the Chateau of Mirimar, the former home of the unfortunate Maximilian of Mexico. The road follows the shore just within reach of the spray, and ends in a lovely garden that loses itself among high and very picturesque hills. The *chateau*, built upon a low promontory, and with the windows on three sides of it opening directly upon the sea, is an ideal villa, crowded with quaint and beautiful wares. The custodian, who alone seems to occupy it, shows the visitor through suites of rooms, points out the royal portraits, and calls attention to the rich furniture with an indifferent air, as if he were rather tired of his profession.

The chambers occupied by "Max"—so the



custodian called the late Emperor—are as dainty as the house of a bride. Everything is in perfect taste, and, judging from the atmosphere that is still preserved, the ill-fated man who made himself this charming home by the sea must have been a scholar of much refinement, one who would have preferred the cloistered seclusion of his study to any honors that a throne might bring him. The apartments of the Empress — “poor” Carlotta! — are in strange contrast to the library and the cell-like sleeping-room of her husband. Whether she has taken away the charm with her, or whether the gaudy and unrestful boudoirs never possessed any, I know not, but it is certain that all the wholesome influences of Mirimar, as it now stands, are gathered in his half of the house. The gardens are a wilderness of beauty. I should say that a home such as this



must have been worth twenty empires. It is a pity that there is no one to enjoy it, save the tourist, who lounges about the place for a couple of hours, oppressed with sad memories of the former occupants.

Triest has its Roman antiquities. They begin in the columns of the cathedral on the hill, and end in the arch by the sea. But oh! how fresh these Roman ruins seem to us after the temples of old Egypt!

Having dined in a beer shop and taken beer in a chop house with the jolly "Doctor" of our good ship *Diana*; having sat out the evening over coffee and late papers, to the music of numerous street-musicians, and heard the wind rise and the rain fall with chagrin, I drop down to the docks again, and take the boat for Venice. One night more in the cradle of the deep, and at dawn the sky breaks, and out of the tranquil bosom of the lagoon rise the towers, the domes, the pale walls, the floating gardens that I have grown so familiar with.

Yea verily! out of the East I come to the watery gates of this sad bride of the sea, and find a welcome that has been awaiting me a whole, long, glorious year.

THE END.







UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



**A** 000 542 948 5

